DRILL WITHOUT DRUDGERY. See Page 342.

Contributions by **Jessie Pope, John N. Raphael, Louis Tracy, Edgar Wallace, Etc.**

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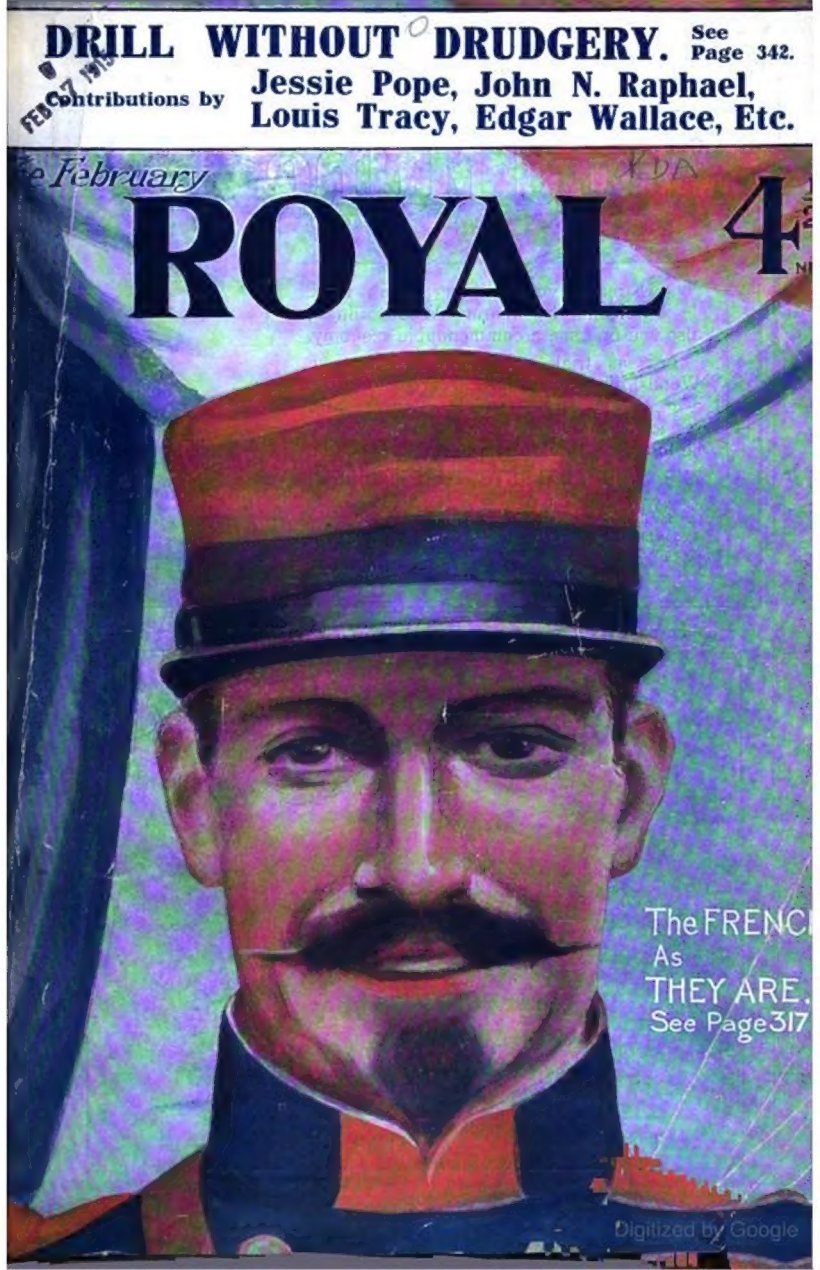

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THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

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N.B.—All the names and characters mentioned in the stories in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are purely imaginary.

The Editor is always ready to consider contributions, whether literary or pictorial, and, where stamps are inclosed, will make every endeavour to insure their safe return in the event of their proving unsuitable, although he cannot hold himself responsible for any MSS. or drawings or photographs sent on approval. They should be addressed to The Editor, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

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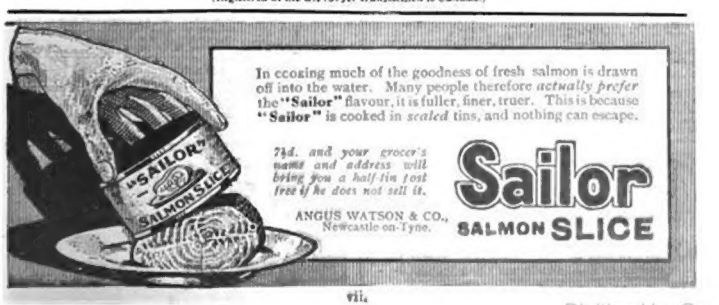
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Photo *H. & W. Ahlby.*

Miss Joan Hay, the charming young actress who made such a hit as Princess Helen in *Princess Caprice*. Miss Hay also appeared in *The Pearl Girl*, and did great things at the Palladium in a strong dramatic play entitled *The Accolade*.

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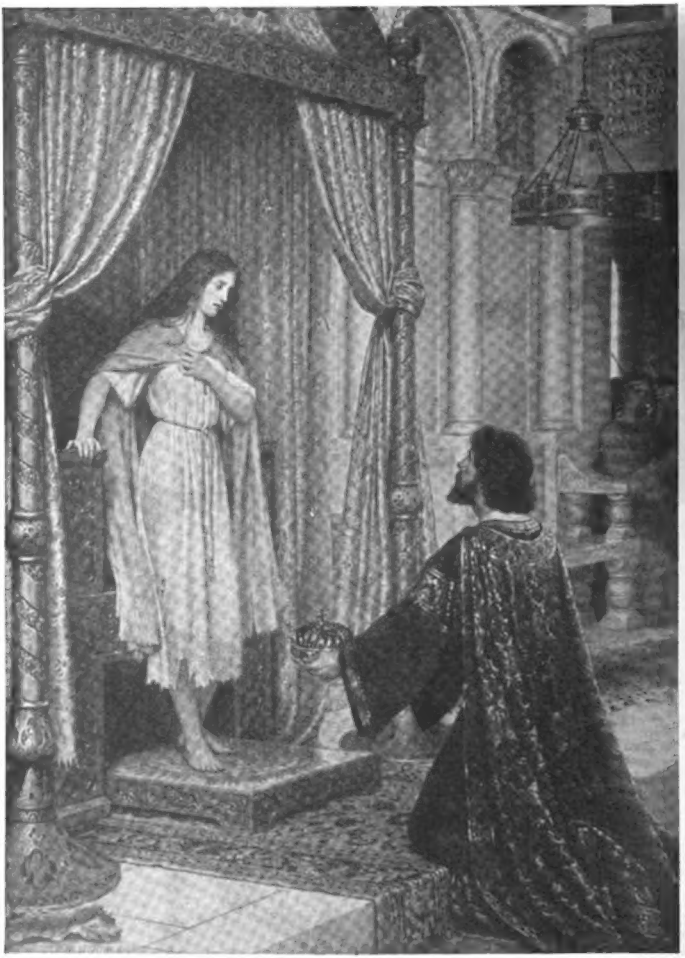

From the Painting by E. Blair Leighton.

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"The King and the Beggar Maid."

The story of King Cophetua and the beggar maid whose beauty so captured his heart that he made her his queen, has been immortalised by Mr. E. Blair Leighton in this charming picture.

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From the Painting by Richard Redgrave. *By permission of the Board of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*

"Cinderella About to Try on the Glass Slipper."

Every child loves the story of Cinderella, the little cinder wench who triumphed over her ugly sisters by marrying the Prince.

FAIRY TALES IN ART

By A. B. Cooper.

It is not to children alone that fairy tales make appeal. Many of our best artists have found subjects worthy of their skill in the realms of fairy-lore, and have produced beautiful pictures, some of which illustrate the following article.

It would be interesting to take the opinion of all the children for the purpose of discovering the fairy tale they like best. Of every hundred fairy tales, ninety-nine might at once be ruled out as having no chance. The appeal of a fairy tale is a subtle thing. Why should "Aladdin and His Lamp" and the story of "The Forty Thieves" be the only two in all the "Thousand and One Nights" which really fire the imagination and live in the memory of a child? Why does a child read many stories with indifference or slight interest, and yet turn again and again to the perusal of "Cinderella," "The Three Bears," "Jack and the Beanstalk," and "Little Red Riding Hood"? The wisest man in the world cannot answer that question.

That is why the fairy tale is such a difficult thing to write. The men and women living

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From the Painting by Myra E. Luenuere. *By permission of the Artist, the owner of the copyright.*

"The Princess and the Magic Poppies."

The Princess Elise in "The Wild Swans" was the victim of a jealous stepmother who put three toads in her bath, but the beauty and innocence of the little Princess transformed them into poppies.

By permission of the Art Illustration Co.

From the Painting by T. B. Blenkhek.

"The Little House in the Wood."

One of the most delightful of the Grimm stories is that of Snow White, who, turned adrift by her stepmother, is befriended by the seven dwarfs who lived in the little house in the wood.

to-day capable of writing a true fairy tale can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and it may be doubted even whether "Peter Pan" or the "Just-So Stories" make quite the same impression upon a child's imagination as "Puss in Boots," "The Sleeping Beauty," and "Beauty and the Beast." The stage management behind Barrie's delightful creations is a little too apparent, and the "Just-So Stories" and the tales told by "Puck of Pook's Hill" undoubtedly smack too much of the schoolroom and the history lesson for the unconscious art of the fairy tale.

It is open to doubt whether there is such a thing as a modern fairy tale. John Ruskin wrote one entitled "The King of the Golden

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From the Painting by Val C. Prinsep, R.A.

"The Goose Girl."

Reproduced by permission from the Original in the possession of the Corporation of Liverpool.

Deprived of her bridegroom by the wickedness of her waiting-maid, the Princess found herself alone in a strange land, and was sent out to tend geese on the common. Like those of all fairy tales, the ending of "The Goose Girl" is a happy one, and the Princess regains her rightful place.

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From the Painting by W. R. Symonds. *By permission of the Corporation Art Gallery and Museum, Bradford.*

"The Princess and the Frog."

The Princess who dropped her golden ball into the fountain consented lightly enough when the frog offered to recover it on condition he might eat, drink, and sleep with her. When the Princess, repenting her bargain, dashed him against a wall, he turned into a handsome Prince.

River," but apart from its literary charm it is simply an echo of the stories he had read in his own childhood, a savoury Irish stew made of odds and ends left in the larder of his memory.

The Brothers Grimm never invented the stories of "Hansel and Gretel," "Hop 'o My Thumb," or "Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs." They simply took them down from villagers who, all unconscious of their value, had kept these treasures stored away in their memory, and were greatly surprised that learned college professors, like Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, should be sufficiently interested in the "History of Tom Thumb," or "The Story of the Three Bears," to trouble to listen to them, much less to write them down.

The modern man who came nearest to the production of a new and real fairy tale was Hans Christian Andersen. Like Peter Pan, he seems to have been incapable of growing up. He is one of the very few children of the modern world, and so, with a child's vision and a man's capacity, was able to realise better than most the point of view of the men who lived in the days when the pixy and the fairy were as real as the woods, fields, and mountains in which they dwelt. Yet the only stories found in the pages of

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From the Painting by Thomas Schaefer.

By permission of Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons, Publishers of the Photogravure.

"Little Red Riding Hood."

"Little Red Riding Hood" has always been popular in the nursery, and the story of her visit to her grandmother and her narrow escape from the wolf, always produces thrills among the little folks.

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From the Painting by Helen M. Jacobs. By permission of the Artist.

"Jack and the Beanstalk."

Jack was a lad who sold his mother's cow for five magic beans, which, as he soon found to relate, they grew into an enormous tree in one night, and led Jack to an enchanted land, where fortune awaited him.

Charles Perrault, to whom the world owes "The Sleeping Beauty," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Bluebeard," "Puss in Boots," and "Cinderella," stories which would inevitably be included, with the possible exception of "Bluebeard," among the twelve best fairy tales of the world, never made any claim to the invention of the subjects. His merit, and it is a sufficient one, consists entirely in having embalmed these old stories, which appear in different guises in the story-books of China and India as well as in those of all the Western nations, in a literary style so admirably adapted to their simple, primitive topics that Perrault's way of telling a story has become the recognised way of telling all fairy stories.

Andersen, in which are true fairy tales, such as "The Snow Maiden" and "The Marsh King's Daughter," are Danish legends dressed in the garment of Andersen's exquisite literary style, and such charming original stories as "The Little Match Girl," "The Ugly Duckling," and "The Little Tin Soldier" are not fairy tales at all, although they are stories for children.

Even that prince of fairy tale writers,

Probably most of our fairy tales were originally myths, part and parcel of the religious mythology of ancient races. For instance, "Jack, the Giant-Killer," whom, when he put on his coat, no eye could see, when he put on his shoes no fleetness could overtake, when he put on his cap no secret could escape, and whose sword no defence could resist, is probably the story of Thor and Loki in Scandinavian mythology, whilst Perrault's story, "*La Belle au Bois Dormante*," our own

"Sleeping Beauty," is the "Legend of the Briar Rose."

The idea of "Cinderella," the little cinder girl, is common to a hundred fairy tales. It is the triumph of the poorest, most despised, oftentimes the ugliest and slowest-witted, but invariably the gentlest, kindest, and most forgiving member of the family, over the other sisters or brothers, who are grasping and ambitious and cruel and treacherous. Cinderella does all the "dirty work," while her sisters have all the fun.

"King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid," a story which is the subject of a lovely lyric by Tennyson, of a splendid masterpiece by Burne-Jones, and of a beautiful picture, here reproduced, by Blair Leighton, whilst it also has the distinction of being mentioned by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*, seems to be another version of the same old story.

"Little Red Riding Hood," probably, next to "Cinderella," the story most likely to top the poll if the suffrage of the nursery was taken, occurs, with but slight variations, in the folk-lore of most European countries, although in its original form it is "*Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*." With all its simplicity of manner and matter, it is probably a colossal ancient myth, perhaps coming to Europe with the Aryan Invasion from the central plains of Asia. It would be futile even to try to trace all its meanings, but "Red Riding Hood" is probably the sun which, after his journey across the blue field of the sky, is swallowed up by the dark wolf of night.

From the Painting by Marianne Preindlsberger. *By permission of the Artist.*

"Little Brother and Little Sister."

Hansel and Gretel went out into the world to escape from an unhappy home, but alas! Hansel drinks of a magic stream and, to his little sister's dismay, turns into a fawn

But, though we grumble at the inability of the modern man to make new fairy tales, yet we are faced with

From the Picture by J. D. Batten. By permission of the Artist.

"Beauty Pricks Her Finger."

The tale of the Princess who, in fulfilment of a curse, pricks her finger with the spindle [illegible] sleep [illegible] forms the

the astounding fact that the old ones in these latter days have come true. What is the aeroplane, which flies with incredible swiftness over mountains and seas and deserts, but the Magic Carpet of the "Arabian Nights"? What is wireless telegraphy but the scientific realisation of the exploits of Puck, who boasted that he could "put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes"? What is the gramophone but a disembodied voice, one of the commonest wonders of fairy tale and legend? Can anything be more magical than the cinematograph, reproducing every movement, every incident before our eyes of a scene which may have been enacted thousands of miles away?

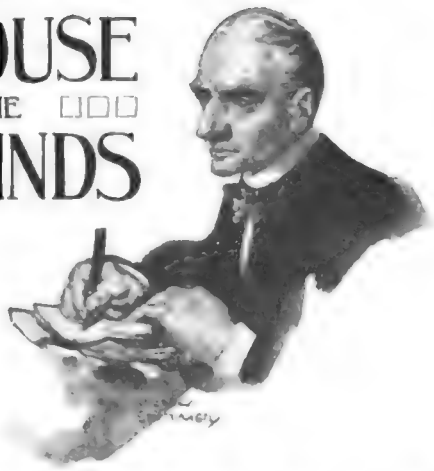
Alas! in thus coming true, the fairy tale is spoilt. It only remained a fairy tale as long as it was untrue to the senses whilst true to the imagination. The child wants no true fairy tale. If the tale is true to everybody, it is untrue to him.

Yet there is one compensation in these days. Our artists have discovered the fairy tale, and some of them have wisely deemed "Cinderella" quite as well worth painting as Joan of Arc, the "Goose Girl" quite as worthy of their best efforts as the loves and laments of Mary, Queen of Scots.

The only wonder is that, from the exhaustless field of fairy-lore, our artists have gathered so few flowers. They have made a beginning, but it is only a beginning. They still turn over the dry bones of history for new subjects, whilst lovely legends and fairy tales, as much alive as ever they were, are neglected by all but a minority.

ANOTHER THRILLING SPY STORY!

THE HOUSE WITH THE RED BLINDS



By Louis Tracy.

The experiences of a trusted secret service agent employed to combat the German spy system are bound to be full of excitement. The following story relates how Mr. Charles F. Furneaux, of the Criminal Investigation Department, outwitted the German agents who were signalling information to the enemy.

Colonel Fox, Chief-Constable of Yorkshire,* was hard at work in his office when a policeman-attendant brought in two cards. They read:

MR ROBERT LINCOLN FABER,
Private Secretary to the
Lord-Lieutenant of Yorkshire.

MR. CHARLES F. FURNEAUX,
Criminal Investigation Department,
New Scotland Yard, London, S.W.

An expression of interest lighted up the official's tired face when the two entered. The Lord-Lieutenant, Sir Digby Grant, had telephoned the previous day, Wednesday, August 12th, telling him of the Government's decision to form a local Secret Service. Colonel Fox knew that Furneaux, one of the famous men of the "Yard," had been deputed to assist the resident Yorkshire agent, none other than Sir Digby's private secretary, to whom the Lord-Lieutenant had lent a powerful Rolls-Royce.

County gossip, too, had it that Faber was far too good-looking a youngster to be placed in constant association with the great man's daughter, Evelyn, a most attractive girl of twenty, and sole heiress of a great landed estate and many industrial undertakings.

Altogether, the visit promised some relaxation from a weary round of work, sufficient for any ordinary man in times of peace, but quadrupled now by the pressure of war.

The Colonel had expected their arrival the previous evening. It had been impossible to acquaint him with their sudden decision to raid the Grange, a remote country house which might, or might not, harbour a number of spies. He was startled, but hardly surprised when Faber told him that, assisted by P. C. Baker, a constable stationed in the hamlet nearest to the Grange, they had captured two unimportant Germans, and brought about the death of Hermann Steinbaum, a master-spy whose machinations had long troubled the British Government.

"Your news only shows that we shall have to drop our kid-glove methods of warfare," said the Chief-Constable emphatically. "All along this coast, from the Tyne to Hull, there are German employees in steel-works and ship-yards, German chemists in industrial concerns, German fish-buyers, German shipping agents, even German bakers and barbers. If I had my way I'd arrest every mother's son of them, and ransack their houses."

* For the purposes of these stories Yorkshire is regarded as having only one Lord-Lieutenant and one Chief-Constable of police. In reality each Riding has these officials.

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"It was no German Baker we had at the Grange last night," grinned Furneaux. "That constable is a useful man, Colonel. He isn't wanted at Nuttonby. Lend him to us."

"With pleasure. But he doesn't strike me as particularly enterprising. Outside routine affairs I have hardly heard his name mentioned once in seven years."

"No one ever heard Kitchener's name during twice seven years in Egypt," said Furneaux drily.

Colonel Fox coughed. He was not accustomed to being pulled up so shortly by a detective-inspector. But the repute of the queer little man, who resembled a comedian rather than a trusted representative of the C.I.D., had travelled far in official circles, so the Colonel swallowed a momentary irritation, and even changed the cough into a laugh.

"And now," he went on quite affably, "how can I help? I have to keep within the four corners of the law, you know."

"Give Mr. Faber a letter authorising your officers and men to assist him and me in every possible way. You can safely leave us to drive a motor-car through all statutes made and provided. By the way, you might instruct superintendents and inspectors to tell us the gist of any confidential reports made to you. Is there anything of the sort that calls for immediate attention?"

"Yes. Signals are being made from some point on the coast to passing vessels, both by day and night. The naval authorities are certain that the movements of warships are communicated to mine-layers with astonishing speed and accuracy. It is not done by pigeons, or wireless, or lamps. They are completely baffled. All they can vouch for is the fact."

"Do they suspect any special locality?"

The Chief-Constable named two towns—Cliffby and Sandborough.

"Police, Territorials, Yeomanry, and Coastguards have watched coast and sea day and night," he added, "but never a suspicious sign is noted, yet mines are laid within a few hours of the passing of a destroyer patrol.

"The most daring instance occurred only yesterday, four miles north-east of Cliffby, when three sets of mines were anchored in the fairway of coastal traffic, though two gunboats passed the previous night over that identical spot. An enemy ship, stealing close in under cover of the darkness, might not be perceived, but she could not invariably choose an unprotected area. Yet it has happened now three times. The Navy are very sore about it, but they can't blame *us*, because they are equally puzzled."

Furneaux stood up.

"You've set us a pretty problem," he said. "I think I'll stroll along the sea front at Cliffby whistling 'Die Wacht am Rhein,' with 'Deutschland über Alles' as an encore. Put a strong guard on the Grange, Colonel, and tell P.C. Baker to pick us up at Cliffby."

"You're going there, then?"

"Yes, *vid* York."

"You're taking a roundabout way."

"I want to consult the military staff at headquarters. Certain items in Steinbaum's notebook should interest them."

Two hours later, at York, the Secret Service men astounded a major and two captains of the Intelligence Department.

Faber, who could decipher the crabbed German characters better than Furneaux, read from a notebook found on Steinbaum's body page after page of details concerning the camps then in process of formation at Darlington, Selby, Strensall, and Doncaster. The composition of each Territorial Brigade was given, together with an estimate of the degree of preparedness of the troops in regard to training, transport, and equipment. Even the names of brigadiers and colonels were recorded.

The major's eyes rounded as he listened.

"By gad, that's a facer!" he muttered when Faber reached the end of that one entry. "It's bang up-to-date. Some of those arrangements were not completed till Tuesday night. Dash it all! One doesn't know whom to suspect. We three, and perhaps two other men in this district, might have written that report. It's absolutely impossible for any other——"

Furneaux held up a hand. To check the stately speech of a Staff Officer did not trouble him at all.

"Don't say that, major," he snapped, "because it *has* been done. Steinbaum was an expert in his line. He could reckon up an army corps from the number of joints supplied daily by the local meat contractor. But he will make no more calculations. He's dead. What I want from you is an authorisation allowing Mr. Faber and me to question officers in charge of detachments on the coast or elsewhere. Your signature carries more weight here than the Home Secretary's."

The major hesitated. Then he glanced at Faber, whom he knew, having often met

him with the York and Ainsty, and wrote. Furneaux giggled gleefully as the car sped through Heworth on the Malton Road.

"If you were not with me, I'd be arrested every half-mile as a German spy," he said to his companion.

Faber smiled, touched the accelerator, and hit up fifty per. He leant slightly to the left, and shouted:

"With a clear run, we should be at Armathwaite in time for luncheon."

"Who says we're going to Armathwaite?" bawled Furneaux, clinging desperately to his motor cap.

"*I* do."

Faber was sure he caught a "Ph-ew!" from Furneaux's pursed lips. But the Rolls-Royce bowled along. "Armathwaite" was the name of the Grant estate.

They were greeted with joyful surprise by Evelyn Grant and lame Jack Faber, an Oxford undergraduate who had arrived overnight to take up his brother's secretarial duties, and with sedate but not wholly subdued interest by Sir Digby.

Certain whispered words exchanged by Evelyn and Bobbie between whiffs of a cigarette on the terrace might be put in evidence against them, but Furneaux was no dawdler. At two o'clock the car was in motion. At three it entered Cliffby, an old-fashioned town perched on the precipitous sides of a ravine which yawned into the North Sea.

Now, the spy-hunters had not headed straight for Cliffby without some sort of encouragement. That invaluable map of Steinbaum's afforded a clue. A few points, invariably towns, were marked with a red ink circle; Cliffby was one. A cross seemed to indicate a meeting-place or available signal station, because that sign was far more plentiful than the circle, and frequently showed a cross-road or bleak hilltop in the midst of wild moorland.

Furneaux jumped to the conclusion, then, that a circle meant "resident spy." If his theory was correct, somewhere beneath the jumbled roofs of the old Yorkshire town dwelt a human viper whose one thought was to strike and poison the hands that fed him.

The two walked each opposing cliff for an hour, and were convinced that no known method of signalling could be operated from the coastline or interior heights without being detected by the keen eyes of the British fleet, to say nothing of the many eyes ashore.

Then they studied the town. There were church towers and tall isolated buildings galore, but who could say which of these sites might be utilised—or how? In his heart of hearts, Faber thought they were wasting time foolishly.

About five o'clock they returned to the hotel in which they had secured rooms. While yet a hundred yards distant from its porch they saw P.C. Baker awaiting them—in full uniform!

Furneaux groaned.

"And this is the warrior whom I lauded to his centurion!" he said.

But Baker retrieved his character. For one thing, he caught Furneaux's almost imperceptible shake of the head, and paid no heed as they walked past. For another, he understood and acted upon the fierce whisper:

"Idiot! Buy a mechanic's overalls and brown boots!"

Thus, an hour later, he looked the part when told to go to a garage and help in cleaning the car. And Fate was kind. It was he who first observed the house with the red blinds!

Furneaux's plan had the simplicity of genius.

"At nine o'clock we each take up one of the three positions we have already selected," he said. "We note every kind of light, bright or dim, which comes within our field. Being strangers we take nothing for granted—street lamp or cottage window—we observe them all. If we see anything peculiar, no matter how slight, each man summons his neighbour and we consult."

Shortly after ten Baker came to Faber, and both sought Furneaux. The policeman led the others to his post.

"What do you make of that there tall house with the four red blinds on the first floor?" he said. "Just watch them blinds, gentlemen, and see what you think of 'em?"

The house faced the sea, and stood in a row of similar buildings on top of the cliff. Three blinds showed the parallelograms of ordinary windows. The fourth revealed exactly half the space in the upper part—the lower was in deep shadow. The blinds were composed of a vivid scarlet material such as small country inns affect, to give an air of cosiness to their snugs and bar-parlours.

Baker had hardly finished speaking when the fourth window bloomed to its full dimensions, and the two middle windows diminished to half size.

"Jumping Moses—the Morse code!" murmured Furneaux, feverishly producing a

note-book and pencil and jotting down . . . . . .

"How long has this been going on?" he breathed.

"I spotted it at once, sir," said Baker. "After the fourth or fifth change I hurried along to Mr. Faber."

The juggling with the blinds was a leisurely business. Each letter was on view for fifteen seconds. Hence, no casual onlooker would note the alteration. Obviously, too, a word of twelve letters consumed three minutes, while intervals were seemingly marked by an extra fifteen seconds allowed for the concluding letter of each word.

Furneaux soon began repeating the letters aloud. They yielded only a meaningless jumble—bzkj, akmgo, and the like.

"Didn't I tell you that friend Baker would come to the rescue?" chortled the detective.

Faber changed the conversation.

"How about solving the cypher?" he said.

"Judging by appearances, I'll unravel it in five minutes."

"Don't we investigate the house?"

"Do you know what Mrs. Patrick Campbell said when asked if she would walk instead of driving in a taxi? The house may tell us lots if we leave it severely alone. By the way, give Baker two sovereigns."

"Certainly."

"You go down to the harbour now," said Furneaux to the astonished policeman. "Find a constable, and get him to assist you in hiring a fishing-boat. Tell the men to pull you straight out to sea—not more than a mile. If you find a trawler, or any other craft, fairly in line with this house, try and spot her number and port of registry. Don't appear too inquisitive. Spies are shy birds. Fail rather than scare them."

Baker hurried off. The signalling display lasted an hour or more. Then the four blinds remained at full length till midnight, when the strong light behind them was extinguished.

The two were moving away when Baker came, breathless with haste.

"There *was* a trawler out there, sir," he said. "She was a good mile-and-a-half off the pier head. We asked her if she knew where the herring shoal was, and she told us there was plenty of fish off Staithes. Her number was S G 79. It only cost me——"

Baker's hand went to his pocket.

"It cost you just two quid," put in Furneaux quickly. "Can you find a room?"

"Yes, sir. I heard of a place from a sergeant."

"Good! You've done another good night's work, Baker. Come to the garage about nine in the morning."

"Surely there cannot be Englishmen in league with German agents on board that trawler?" mused Faber as they walked to the hotel.

"Probably not. But there are hundreds of Germans who can imitate the Yorkshire dialect in a few commonplace sentences," said Furneaux. "For instance, didn't both of us deceive Fritz last night? He would have caught us out soon enough in a long conversation, but any blithering idiot can say 'Ay' for 'Yes,' and 'Noa' for 'No.'"

He was almost as good as his word in decoding the cypher. The chief difficulty lay in the fact that the words were German, and he was not acquainted with the proportional use of the various letters in that language. As in English, however, "e" came easily first, and shrewd guessing gave him "nacht" and "die." Thenceforth it was plain sailing. The translation ran:—

. . . and one cruiser passed North 3 p.m. Number of torpedo patrol and hours of cruising apparently unchanged. Last night one gunboat with lights out lay three miles N.E. till dawn. Another, carrying sailing boat light, lay four miles E. Avoid the Tyne and Humber. To-morrow, same hour, important.

"There's many a true word spoken in cypher," grinned Furneaux, when their joint labours were finished, because Faber's accurate knowledge of German came in peculiarly useful. "Now we'll go to bed."

There was trouble next day when the detective exercised his waspish humour on a superfine Lieutenant-Commander of the Royal Navy at Sandborough. The senior service is so thoroughly efficient that it cannot even imagine the possibility of a chink in its armour. But Furneaux cared as little for naval susceptibilities as for the dignity of a Lord-Lieutenant. He thumped a cabin table when assured that the patrol had seen S G 79 fishing along the coast.

"Is the information given in this message correct or false?" he shrilled.

"It's right enough as far as it goes. Anyone with a pair of binoculars could supply it," was the sceptical rejoinder.

"A pair of binoculars might also take it fifty miles out to sea last night, and send it another fifty miles by rigging a portable wireless, I suppose?"

"Don't you mean to act in this matter?" broke in Faber quietly.

A stout, elderly woman snatched at a small pile of documents. "Put those down, *fraulein*," said Furneaux in German. "If you don't, I'll shatter your hand with a bullet!" (*Page* 310, *col.* 2.)

The Lieutenant-Commander was undoubtedly ruffled, but he replied courteously enough:

"I shall communicate with the Admiral, of course."

"Why not go a step further? Suggest an eleventh-hour change in to-night's patrol, and the arrest of S G 79 about midnight."

"Yes. I'll do that."

"One thing more," snapped Furneaux. "Leave a sub in charge of this hooker, and come with us to the signalling station."

During those few minutes the sailor would cheerfully have dropped the detective overboard. They were the best of friends before night fell, and the Lieutenant-Commander carried with him a brand new selection of capital stories wherewith to regale the wardroom.

At ten o'clock the three stood on the marine promenade at Cliffby (Baker was not far away, but he had other occupation), and watched the house with the red blinds slowly winking its treachery. Armed with a prepared code, Faber translated each sentence as Furneaux supplied the letters. The movements of warships that day were duly chronicled, and there were intimate details of the embarkation of troops at Southampton.

The blinds did not remain stationary until long after eleven. When the night's budget was closed unmistakably, Furneaux whistled the opening bars of "It's a long way to Tipperary," and the tune was repeated at some little distance.

"Come now," he said. "We'll probably hear some squealing, but it can't be helped."

He and Faber, and a very convinced Lieutenant-Commander, were admitted through the front door of the house, from which two uniformed policemen emerged into the garden, lest anyone attempted to escape from a balcony on the first floor. At the foot of the stairs they met Baker, an inspector, a sergeant, and a white-faced landlady. Then they went to the door of the room, which was locked.

The inspector weighed sixteen stone, which was almost too much for the job, because the lock burst so suddenly that he nearly fell headlong.

German thoroughness had seen to it that the unexpected opening of the door would switch out the electric light, but that precaution was of no avail, since Furneaux flashed his electric torch on the interior, and revealed two women seated at a table. One, a stout, elderly woman, snatched at a small pile of documents.

"Put those down, *fraülein*," said Furneaux in German. "If you don't, I'll shatter your hand with a bullet!"

Three paragraphs in the newspapers during the next couple of days bore intimately on the night's adventures, though very few people connected more than one of them with a quiet little Yorkshire town. They read, in due order:

(A.) Some excitement was caused in Cliffby by the arrest, late on Thursday night, of a Danish lady and her nurse who had lodgings in the town. The lady, who gave the name of Nersen, was supposed to be suffering from a form of eczema which entailed the use of red blinds in her sitting-room and bedroom. The charge against both women was heard *in camerâ*, and they were removed to Holloway Prison on Friday.

(B.) The Sandborough trawler, *Susan*, No. 79, was brought into Sandborough early on Friday by a British destroyer. This boat had not returned to port during the past fortnight, and was supposed to have taken refuge at Lerwick. It is now alleged that she was captured off the Dogger by a German cruiser on the 6th, and her crew interned at Wilhelmshaven, while she was manned by an English-speaking crew of Germans. The authorities refuse any information.

(C.) A German vessel, equipped as a mine-layer, was discovered and sunk by a destroyer patrol soon after dawn on Friday. She had already laid a number of mines within a few miles of Hartlepool, but these were recovered and exploded.

"The pace is too good to last," signed Furneaux over a farewell whisky-and-soda with the Lieutenant-Commander at one a.m. on Friday. "We're bound to have a set-back soon. If we don't, the Kaiser will send a secret mission to exterminate Mr. Faber and myself."

"That's our friend's modest way of talking, which you will have observed already," laughed Faber, turning to the sailor. "I'm nothing more or less than a chauffeur."

"Your turn will come," said the detective. "When you feel downhearted remember Baker! Now, as we have been favoured of the gods, we'll sleep, breakfast, and then I'll take you to Armathwaite."

(Further exploits of Mr. Charles F. Furneaux in tracking down the enemy will appear next month. Don't miss them on any account.)

The FRENCH As THEY ARE

By John N. Raphael.

Do we really understand our French Allies even yet? That is the question which Mr. John N. Raphael, the brilliant French correspondent of a host of newspapers, discusses in this article. He has summed up British and French characteristics in sure, vivid phrases, and the result is not the least important contribution to the literature of the war.—Ed. R.M.

One of the most curious features of the relationship between Frenchmen and ourselves is—or perhaps now we may say was—our mutual ignorance of one another. When one remembers how much intercourse there has always been between England and France—for there has always been intercourse, either in enmity or in friendship—it is really rather strange that the French and English know so little of each other.

Until quite recently the average Englishman's idea of the average Frenchman was typified by André de Grival in Pinero's play, *The Amazons*. The Englishman used to think of the Frenchman as a parody of his own enthusiasms, with a genius for trifling which the Englishman admired while he affected to despise it.

You may often have seen something of the inarticulate antagonism between two brothers, one of whom does anything he lays his hand to with a certain grace and ease, while the other, whose attributes are perhaps more solid than his brother's, would give them all if he could hand a cup of tea or pass a compliment with the ease that his brother possesses. And the heavy but sterling brother sometimes makes himself a little bit ridiculous by trying to ape the other's graces.

It has always been of interest to me, living as I do in constant intercourse with Frenchmen, Englishmen, Frenchwomen, and Englishwomen, that, whether in admiration or the reverse, the French and we always think of each other in superlatives. For instance, when we knew even less of the Frenchman than we know to-day, we could see nothing in him except the man who tried to play games and could not, the man to whom frivolity was everything. At the same period, while we were visualising our neighbour as a ballet-dancer with football boots, the Frenchman's idea of us was of a nation whom he feared and envied for its capacity in endeavour, and despised for a hypocrisy which was really lack of power or lack of desire to articulate. The Englishman's

gift of silence was, and is, just as great a puzzle to the Frenchman as the Frenchman's gift of speech was, and is, a puzzle to the Englishman.

It is perhaps only natural that on each side of the Channel we came to the sweeping conclusion that there were no silent Frenchmen and therefore no Frenchmen who thought, and that all Englishmen were heavy mentally. Now the French frothiness, while it is undoubtedly a national characteristic, is also a national asset; it is a thing to admire.

For the French gift of frivolity is not typified by the loud laugh of the *café*, it is typified by the aristocrat of the revolution who could go to the scaffold with a joke on his lips. The joke was not bravado; he was not braving death, he was accepting it as the inevitable, and his joke was the attitude of the fatalist. The Frenchman of the towns and of the country both is essentially a fatalist, and it is this fatalism, this sense that what must be must be, which gives him the knack of taking life lightly without losing the groundwork of strength which is always there when emergency calls for it.

There is one phrase which is more used in France, perhaps, than any other. "*Qu'est-ce que vous voulez que je vous dise, moi?*"—roughly, "What about it?" I suppose every nation admires in itself, as every individual admires in himself, its own ideals—the qualities it would like to possess and hopes that it possesses. The French ideal is undoubtedly courage, and where we failed for many years to understand the Frenchman was that we did not realise that courage could find expression otherwise than silently and grimly—as we express it ourselves.

Everyone remembers how amused we were in England when the Frenchman began to take an interest in sport. What we forgot was that a child must toddle and stumble before it can walk, and that the child which picks itself up with a laugh after every bump and stumbles again and again is likely to walk rather well before long. It is not very many years ago since we laughed at Frenchmen's football, and jeered at Frenchmen's conception of "le sport." We thought they were playing at sport; they were not—they were learning. Nobody laughs at French football to-day, and Frenchmen have the laugh of us, for they will never allow a game, as we allow it, to crowd everything else into the background.

The modern Frenchman has learnt hygiene; in fact he is a hygiene crank nowadays. He has learnt to dress well; in fact, he dresses a little too well if anything. Superlatives again! The modern Frenchman, having watched what games and a cold bath have done for Englishmen, has adopted these national habits at last, and the very length of time before they were adopted shows that our idea of the Frenchman's slapdash and frivolity was exaggerated, as most of our ideas about Frenchmen have always been.

Frenchmen are impetuous, but it is very apparent in—an excellent instance—their conduct of their love affairs, that underneath the impetuosity is a very solid groundwork of reasoning power. This is the one quality of Frenchmen which we have always failed to recognise though we are beginning to recognise it now. We have never realised the truth that the Frenchman reasons with colder and harder precision than any man of any nation. I believe it is this faculty which has made him pre-eminent in many of the exact sciences, which has brought him to the fore in the motor-car industry, and which gives him his place in aviation. The national impetuosity allows him to dare, the national gift of reasoning quickly and surely enables him to dare safely.

The Frenchman has always shrugged his shoulders at us as a nation of shopkeepers. We have, in return, failed to grasp the simple fact that the Frenchman is an admirable business man, and he has allowed us, to his own advantage very often, to nourish the error. Take for an example of what I mean (and being an Englishman I naturally find difficulty in giving expression to my meaning exactly) two great institutions—language and marriage. Compare the French language with our own. Think of anything you wish to describe, in English first, and then in French. You will find that in your English description you are obliged to sacrifice precision to brevity. A Frenchman will need more words to explain his thoughts than the Englishman will, but he will be able to explain them exactly—much more exactly.

Our mistaken idea of the Frenchman forms a mental picture of a sensualist. The Frenchman's mistaken mental picture of the Englishman leaves out the senses entirely. Both mental pictures err. The Frenchman looks on marriage as a contract. It is a business transaction, and husband and wife are partners in the business of life. This being so, it is rather amusing that Frenchmen should affect to laugh at the predominance of business on the British mental horizon.

There is no cleverer business head in the world than that of a capable Frenchwoman, though she frequently hides her business qualities under an affectation of frivolity.

The Frenchman's gift of speech and ease of gesture is a perpetual wonder to the Englishman, who masks his own feelings behind a wall of silence and reserve.

The Frenchwoman has the national characteristic in a superlative degree. It is just as absurd to consider Frenchwomen as dolls because of their outward flippancy, as it was to fail to see the strength underlying the Frenchman's flippant surface attitude to life, for there is no cleverer business head in the world than the brain of a capable Frenchwoman. I am not sure that the Frenchwoman's affectation of frivolity is not a result of that business-like brain of hers. Man likes frivolity in a woman, and the Frenchwoman knows it. She has realised the truth that a man prizes sound common-sense under a flippant veil more than he would prize the same quality if the flippancy were not there.

Perhaps it is because I live in France and love it, perhaps it is because I have a French wife who has more business sense than I shall ever attain, and who, though I am quite middle-aged and she is as nearly so as a woman ever becomes, keeps a large doll in her drawing-room, and loves a romp now and then as much as though we were both ten years old—that I love the French flippancy and lightness of spirit as much as I love the French strength of character which underlies it.

The Frenchman (and the Frenchwoman) is never too old to learn, and when France adopts, after careful if rapid reasoning, something from another country, she usually contrives to improve off it. French civilisation has moved more quickly of recent years than ours. We used to laugh at the French *jeune fille* who knew nothing or pretended to know less. It never occurred to us perhaps that our own girls used to be just like that till games humanised them. It did occur to the French, and the modern French girl, having learnt later, has avoided the fault of her game-playing, cross-Channel cousins, and, while playing games in moderation, loving fresh air and frequenting her brothers and cousins much more than she used to, has succeeded in acquiring a freedom of manner which has not degenerated into any absurd attempt at imitating man.

A Frenchman said to me one day: "Why do your women smoke so *aggressively*?" The criticism was true. The French girl has learnt to be free without the necessity for self-assertion, and there is a fair comparison to be made between the manner in which French girls have taken to games and Frenchmen have adopted racing. Every one who

The Englishman's idea of his neighbour across the Channel as a ballet-dancer with football boots is wholly mistaken. The French have learnt to play football, but they never allow it to crowd everything else into the background.

On the battlefields of Europe, France and England are learning a new appreciation and understanding of each other's qualities, which is typified by the complete friendship existing between General Joffre and General French.

has visited Longchamps or Auteuil knows how favourably the French race meetings compare for social grace and charm with any English race meeting, except, perhaps, Ascot.

I am inclined to believe that the Germans would never have gone to war with France at all this year if they had realised the meaning of the evolution of the modern Frenchman. The national heroes of France are no longer the same, and the national heroes are a very good signpost to the national ideas. France used to admire the lady-killer and the fop, and to despise the tradesman. Now the Comte de Dion sells motor-cars and young France admires above all other men Védrines the aviator, and Carpentier the boxer. The evolution has meant France's strength in her hour of trial.

The French sportsman is a splendid sportsman nowadays, and French sportsmanship has made the Frenchman a magnificent soldier, for he has learnt to take hard knocks with a smile, and, smiling, wait his opportunity to hit back harder in return. The baby has learnt to run, and has

remembered that it was tumbling which taught him. In other words, the Frenchman has become a sportsman, and, having lost none of the national impetuosity and lightness of heart or imagination in the process, is about as fine a sportsman as one could possibly wish for.

Germany was badly served by her spies and her newspaper correspondents, for the Germans have never realised that the new France had springs of steel under the frivolous surface which was shown to the outer world. Germany never realised that France's attitude towards her during the pin-pricking period of the last fifteen years, which culminated at Agadir, was not the attitude of a man beaten to his knees, or grown callous, but was that of a clever boxer who ignores his adversary's blundering blows and heavy chaff, and is waiting quietly and smilingly to deliver the knock-out blow. This attitude of France towards the inevitable war—for every Frenchman knew that war would be coming, sooner or later—is the more admirable because, while preparing for the shock on the basis of Russian and British help, Frenchmen never quite believed that British help would come.

I remember, on the day before the war, travelling to Normandy with the wife of a French officer. I did not confess that I was an Englishman until she had declared that her husband and all his friends felt very little confidence in British help. Before the war began, France was as convinced of British hypocrisy as England was convinced of French frivolity. We did not think that Frenchmen would respond as they have responded, or, rather, we did not believe that the French national spirit would endure the strain of a long war bravely and smilingly, as it is enduring. Frenchmen, on their side, entirely underestimated British honesty, or, to speak more plainly, they believed that Britain might think it more profitable to stand aloof and let France and Germany fight it out. France, when she found out her mistake, welcomed the fact that she was mistaken with enthusiasm, and every man in khaki is a hero to every Frenchwoman now.

I may add that Frenchmen are amazed at our "contemptible little army's" love of taking the hard knocks, and we cannot fail to recognise the miracle of evolution in the French national spirit, which has allowed France's great army to fight without questioning, France's brilliant generals to act under orders without quarrelling among themselves, and France's stay-at-homes to accept the veil of silence which hangs over the war, in a spirit of calm and trustful confidence which was wholly alien to the France of forty years ago.

Modern France and modern England are learning on the battlefields to realise each other's qualities. They realise each other's faults as well, perhaps, but the realisation no longer causes antagonism. There are no better friends to-day than General Joffre and General French, and the result of that friendship has made itself felt, and is making itself felt every moment on the far side of the Vosges. For France, the new France, has learnt to wait without impatience while Russia pours its sea of men towards Berlin.

LARGESSE.

"Bon jour, amie chèrie Margot—
I've sailed across la manche,
To help you beat the "Bosches," and so
Accomplish your révanche.
And I am tall and khaki-clad,
And you have eyes of blue,
So won't you kiss a soldier lad
Who'd give his life for you?"

"Bon jour, ami chèri Tom-mee—
Ver' glad you came away
To help us beat les Allemands—oui,
And quickly win the day.
So, since you say mes yeux sont bleus,
Bend down—I do not care!—
And kiss me if you will, mon vieux—
Tiens! *zere! and zere! and zere!"*

F. E. B.

THE FIRST SPANKING

The Humorous Artists Revive Memories of Their Youth.

By Lesbia Robinson.

"Mother Takes a Hand."—Mr. Starr Wood's idea of the correction of a very small infant.

Max Beerbohm, in an essay on the Victorian gentleman, describes him as passing his life seated at a polished round table leaning his head on his hand, from which altitude he only descended to beat his children. I know I have garbled a fine passage, but that is the gist of it, and, after all, the gist of anything is all we want. Moreover, most stories for Victorian children ended something like this:

"'Sir,' said Harry, 'I have told a lie.'

"His father went to the corner to get his whip, and whipped him till he smarted again."

That is always the measure of Victorian correction—to be whipped "till he smarted again." Something like second thoughts, or getting one's second wind, no doubt.

The melancholy hobby of the Victorian gentleman has not descended to his Georgian successor. Nowadays there is a large number of smiling infants who would improve in this process of smarting again, only the priceless opportunity is never afforded them, and they gibber on in their insane foolishness.

This result is attributed to the spread of humanity, but some people seem to forget that what may seem humanity to the young is at the same time cruelty to the grown-up. What, that is to say, is a temporary local cutaneous shock suffered by an obstreperous child compared with the refinements of torture his behaviour is inflicting on the sensitive nervous system of grown-up people? If anyone must suffer, surely it should be the young, for they have more time in which to get over it.

Personally I have never thrashed a child, but the omission is due not so much to lack of provocation as to fear of the law. You see, the child I have wished to thrash has always belonged to someone else.

Now what are the salient features of the first-born's first correction?

First, I should say, amateurishness on the part of the executioner, who may be either parent, but is actually the stronger-minded of the two.

Second, bravado on the part of the to-be-chastened, who feels heroism yawning before him or her.

Third, sentimental emotion on the part of both parents who feel that a strong adult is taking advantage of his or her gross strength to torture a little innocent lamb.

Watch father at the fell work for the first time. How gingerly he manœuvres the babe—you call it a babe even if it is an iniquitous ten or eleven in the tragic circumstances—into the conventional attitude. He raises his leaden hand. *Plop!* It has fallen!

"The Hand of Fate."—The feelings of a very small boy under chastisement, touchingly illustrated by Esmond

Mother shudders and holds her fingers in her ears. Father dashes the perspiration from his brow. The victim lets out a yell fit to wake the dead, and feels that after all it isn't so bad.

How merciless is the British parent!

To me, a student of human nature, it has always seemed curious that one particular form of torture appears to have been sanctified and put on a plane by itself by public opinion. You may beat your child, dog, or horse in order to hurt it, for the purpose of maintaining authority, and the world applauds. Yet if you hurt it in any other way—say, for example, by sticking a pin into it, you are branded as a monster. I daresay you are a monster, too. If anyone came and told me Mrs. Jones had stuck a pin into little Ethel, as a punishment, I should endeavour to pronounce the word "Monster!" before anyone else. Yet probably she would have caused little Ethel less permanent suffering than by striking her severely several times with some form of footwear. I leave to you the problem for what it is worth.

It is, of course, possible to depute someone else to perform the ceremony, but the parents who would deliver up their infants to be smitten by an outsider are few and far between. Probably the mother, imperilling her coiffure among the sofa cushions, would endure far more agony at the thought of receiving the mangled remains of her precious child than if she herself had been the instrument of fate.

There are parents who boast openly that they have never spanked their offspring, a piece of information which is usually superfluous, since nothing else could account for the atrocious behaviour of the said offspring.

"I have never laid a hand on Edwin," one fond mother told me proudly. "I think it is so much

"The Seat of Action."—The agony of tender-hearted parents feelingly portrayed by Mr. Thomas Henry.

wiser to appeal to his better feelings. Slapping is no good with a boy like him."

In this I quite agreed, for nothing short

of an army boot would have sufficed to instil virtue into such a graceless young cub.

Some parents, on the other hand, deal out slaps for each and every offence, until their children grow so expert at dodging that the destination of the said slaps is as uncertain as that of the mythical Russian troops. To them a slap is a sovereign remedy for all faults, from a spill on the tablecloth to the appropriation of "company" cake.

One worthy father, with a family of four boys and very little leisure, used to devote Saturday evenings to awarding the spankings earned during the week. After tea the culprits lined up outside his study, and there was great competition for the last place, since after a week's arrears inflicted on three lusty strugglers the paternal arm was wont to wax feeble and comparatively harmless.

"The Tables Turned."—Mr. Thompson's warning to the father who attempts to thrash a son whose muscles are superior to his own.

There is something to be said for the parent who doled out a spanking to each of his children every Monday, so as to cover all eventualities during the week. Unhappily, the youngsters considered that their ordeal entitled them to an orgy of bad behaviour during the ensuing week, and were most zealous in obtaining value for their suffering—so much so that, in order to make the spankings adequate to the occasion, the relentless father was forced to curtail his breakfast and do a furious sprint for the train. Being of portly build and apoplectic tendencies, this was bad for him. The end came one Monday morning, when, having wielded the cane with unusual vigour, he collapsed over the prostrate body of his firstborn and died, a martyr to duty.

"Painless Chastisement."—Mr. Reg. S. Smith depicts the small boy who finds a book a useful protection.

The choice of weapons is a subject for consideration. Those who prefer to suffer with their children will probably use their hands, while the more heartless will resort to a stick, slipper, or, if they are altogether devoid of the milk of human kindness, a strap.

One unhappy father of my acquaintance, driven to the point of frenzy, once had resort to his wife's rolling-pin, and, his aim being bad and the victim as slippery as an eel, nearly brained his own first-born. Now he leaves all corporal punishment to his wife.

And while you are at it do, I implore you, make a good job of it. Don't apologise, and say how it pains you to hurt your little innocent child; he won't believe you, and, anyhow, he has had a run for his money. Don't hold him

Mr. Welldon Halliday illustrates the bravado of the infant who despises his father's cane.

more forcibly on his hair or his pet engine.

But as he grew more enterprising, so the difficulties increased. When Freddy tore up the housemaid's apron to make sails for his boat it was no use mutilating his garments, since he would greatly have preferred to go clad in rags; when he sat the grey Persian cat on a fly-paper it would have been sheer folly to affix one to his wicked little person. The climax came when he emptied a pan full of black currant jam over the cat—his mother was a thrifty soul, and not even for the sake of adhering to her pet theory could she sacrifice another 10 lbs. of home-made jam.

So in the extremity she resorted to the old, time-honoured mode of correction.

And that was how Freddy had his first spanking!

gingerly as though he were a drawing-room ornament; take a firm grip, and let fly with the weapon of your choice; and, above all, don't be paralysed by heart-rending shrieks—they are as much part of the ceremony as the applause at a theatre.

There are, of course, substitutes for spanking which are more or less effective, such as putting the offender in the corner or depriving him of some treat. One conscientious mother of my acquaintance used to make a practice of fitting the punishment to the crime. This was comparatively easy when Freddy's sins were confined to pulling his little sister's curls or breaking her best doll, for his worthy parent simply repeated the operation

"A Striking Moment."—Mr. Alfred Leete's conception of a painful ceremony.

"SOME SPY"

"'But what good came of it at last?'
Cried little Peterkin:
'Nay, that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'"

By Jessie Pope.

When war was declared and Cicely Creighton announced her anxiety to give her life for her country, her brother Bertie observed, "I don't think," and the rest of the family remained disappointingly unmoved. Not that they were insensible to the gravity of the situation, far from it, but they had become accustomed to Cicely's crazes, and looked on this slashing patriotism as her "latest."

When Mr. Creighton transplanted his family from town to a roomy, rambling old farmstead on the East Coast, Cicely had opposed the arrangement with more enthusiasm than success. She had no fancy for burying herself alive for six months in a remote country district, where the only object of interest was an occasional windmill and the only sport of the country dyke-jumping. But her parents concluded that a little burying alive would do their good-looking, mettlesome firstborn no harm, and Cicely, with a natural amount of girlish grumbling, accepted the inevitable.

The country where she found herself was flat as a billiard table, and intersected by innumerable dykes, which on a sunny day converted the grassy landscape into a huge green chess-board crossed and recrossed with blue ribbons.

Still there was a subtle magic about the place, and during the early part of their sojourn Cicely, armed with a pole, had often condescended to join her brothers' pole-jumping expeditions, and had become quite expert. She had conquered the dykes, but no legs were springy enough and no pole long enough to negotiate the "drains," as the wider waterways were called—forty-foot channels which always forced the jumping party to the nearest bridge.

Even pole-jumping palls, so the declaration of war in the early days of August brought a welcome change in the monotony of her exile, and when half-a-dozen Territorials and an officer were billeted on them temporarily, she succumbed to a very sharp attack of khaki fever. If the daily spectacle of trench digging, the throwing up of earthworks, the mounting of guns, the sharp orders, the sharper execution of them, electrified the calm, not to say drowsy, countryside, it was no wonder that the excitable Cicely was at one moment burning with enthusiasm and at the next chafing at her helplessness.

Why, because she was a woman, must she stand idle while she felt capable not only of sharing a campaign, but conducting it? Such self-confidence was surprising to all outside her own circle, and though her young brothers displayed contempt for Cicely's "show off," her parents smiled indulgently when their daughter, with sparkling eyes and flushed cheeks, laid down the law to the "Terriers" they entertained. The officer, a brown-faced, grey-eyed young soldier named Morrison, had known Cicely in London, and had been attracted by the impulsive recklessness of a nature which was so different from his own, for though the young lieutenant was devoted to his duty and his country's cause, he was at the same time far from loquacious about it.

It was when the soldiers had gone to their lines of defence a mile distant, and the Creighton household settled down to its old ways that Cicely felt a trifle dull, and longed for an opportunity of distinguishing herself in some heroic manner in her country's service, and incidentally impressing Lieutenant Morrison with her courage.

"Now we must stand steady," her father said, the day the soldiers left, "live our ordinary lives, and keep our heads cool whatever happens."

"But I want to *do* something, dad," Cicely protested. "You and the mater can't,

because you're too old, the boys can't, because they're too young, but I *can* and I *must!*"

"Then learn to make bandages and pyjamas, my dear," suggested her mother placidly.

"And how to nurse the wounded," added her father.

Cicely shook her head impatiently.

"What's the good of *that*, when I want to be wounded myself?" she cried. "I'd simply love to be a dispatch rider or a scout. I can ride, I can bicycle, I'm strong as a horse and keen as mustard, and I'm not frightened of all the Germans in the world! Oh, daddy, do let me practise with a rifle. You may wish you had one day."

"Oh, don't let her, pater," cried Bertie, with a shudder; "that would make her really dangerous. Last night when we were making ducks and drakes she hit my head instead of the sea."

"Never mind, little girl," said her father, while the others laughed. "You leave the guns to the men. We shall all find plenty of work when the time comes, and many of us will serve our country best by quietly doing our duty at home."

But how could Cicely settle down to home duties when there were soldiers everywhere? Even the old windmill a mile away was now used as a look-out and ammunition store and guarded by Lieutenant Morrison and his stalwarts, and the girl's thoughts were always flying across the intervening dykeland to the grave-faced young soldier, who had silently sympathised when she bewailed her helplessness, though he, also, advocated the needle as a better weapon for a woman than the sword.

His opinion, however, was so pleasantly expressed that the would-be Amazon impulsively started knitting a woollen helmet and a pair of marching socks. But, alas! the helmet, owing to her impatience of maternal instructions, turned out such a curious instrument of torture and gripped Bertie, who obliged by trying it on, so tightly round the neck, that Cicely, in alarm, slit it up with a pair of scissors to save him from suffocation.

Something, also, went wrong with the socks. They bulged bountifully on the toe and calf, but were so compressed round the instep that her father, who played the part of mannequin this time, was forced to point out that they would put the wearer out of action before even the enemy's shrapnel got a chance.

"If you'd only make things for the *Germans*," said her cruel brother, "there'd be some sense in it. But, look here, Sis—I'll give you a job. Make six badges for my patrol and you'll be serving your country. I want a British lion with his paw on the neck of a black eagle, and the 'C.O.'—Creighton's Own—in red letters. We must wear a badge in case the sentries challenge us at night when we're scouting on our own."

"Oh, run away and play," retorted his discomfited but still arrogant sister. "It's time you little boys went back to boarding-school. The sentries have quite enough to do looking out for real spies, and one of these days you'll find yourselves shot before you know where you are."

It was quite true. Rumour of spies was in the air, suspicious characters had been seen loitering not far from the windmill, and the vigilance of the sentries had been redoubled in consequence.

Oh, to capture a spy single-handed! That was Cicely's latest craze, and while the whirr of the sewing-machine sounded briskly from the morning-room, where Mrs. Creighton made shirts and pyjamas and ripped unbleached calico for bandages, her daughter concealed herself among the sand dunes or by the reed-grown banks of the dykes, ever ambitious to distinguish herself in more warlike and adventurous enterprises.

One evening, after dinner, when most of the lamps on the ground-floor of the farmstead were extinguished and the bedroom candles lit, Cicely stole forth into the dusky garden and stood leaning her arms on the low wall which divided it from the sandy road. Although a bright half-moon was rising over the dark stretch of the sea, the after-glow of the sunset shone with a clear radiance in the west.

The soft, eloquent wind that set the reeds whispering to the dykes, breathed romance and adventure, and with all her passionate heart Cicely longed to be a heroine whose name would go down to unborn generations. Joan of Arc, Flora Macdonald, Grace Darling, Cicely Creighton! Why not? *They* had been lucky! Opportunities had come their way—they had seized them. Oh, for the chance of seizing hers, the chance of winning the adulation of nations and incidentally that of Lieutenant Morrison!

Her blue eyes glanced across to the sails of the windmill, black against the clear western sky, and while she looked she became conscious of the muffled sound of wheels approaching along the sandy road. It was a cart, driven by a man in a slouch hat, who

In a few seconds she was gripping the grass on the bank, and slowly dragging her exhausted body out of the water.
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drew rein a few yards from the wall where she stood, as a dusky figure rose suddenly from the bushes by the side of the dyke which divided the road from the meadow.

"You're here, then!" said the driver roughly. "I told you to wait by the cross-roads."

"So I did," came the husky reply, "but two o' them soldier chaps passed and looked very old-fashioned at me, so I moved on a bit."

"Well, you've all the further to go now. Here is the bag; mind you don't drop it, or it will be the worse for you. Who-a, steady, you brute!" This to the horse who took a step forward. "There's the camp, the mill is your mark, and the officer is your man. Here, take it. I must be off. Well, what's wrong now?" and the driver paused as the other hesitated, and said:

"I don't like the job—like as not I'll get shot over it."

"Go on, you fool! You don't like the job, but you like the pay, or maybe you don't want the money either?"

"Yes I do," said the man, "but——"

"Then keep your bargain and I'll keep mine. Do your job properly and come to me for the money in the morning."

As he spoke he handed a bag over the side of the cart. The other took it gingerly, placed it under his arm, and lurched off along the track by the dyke-side, while the cart took the opposite direction along the road by the sand-hills.

Cicely's heart thumped; her pulses raced. All the rumours of spy scares surged to her brain. Suspicious characters were supposed to be lurking near tunnels, fortifications, ammunition stores, and it was the mill the man with the mysterious bag was making for! What was in that bag? Why was he to be so careful not to drop it? Why was he afraid of getting shot?

"This is where I come in!" muttered Cecily shivering with excitement. Her brain worked quickly. She glanced at the house—the lamp was still burning in her father's study. Should she call him? No, this was *her* opportunity, and it was up to her to take it, to make a bee-line across country, armed with her jumping-pole, and warn the

unconscious camp of its danger. Her chance had come at last, and Cicely felt no fear, only a great uplifting of spirit and the determination to let no one share her danger or her triumph.

Running lightly to the shed, she seized her jumping-pole, climbed the garden wall, sped across the road, and, with the paling light of the dead sunset before and the brightening half-moon behind, cleared the first dyke with a lot to spare, and began the race which was to be written in letters of gold in the annals of history. Hardly conscious of her body, she sped along in a glorious dream, almost as if she were acting a part on the world's stage with the admiring eyes of posterity upon her.

Drowsy cattle lifted their heads and gazed curiously at her as she sped by them; the night wind whispered encouragement and applause as she leapt from one reed-fringed dyke-side to the other. Thrice she came down, when the pole thrust forward carelessly and at random slipped beneath her. But she was up again, up and on, panting now, with rough, gasping breaths, but still uplifted with the great hope that she would be there in time, while the mill sails, black against the pale horizon, beckoned her on.

The distance was nearly covered, when all at once her progress was barred by the "drain," which in her excitement she had forgotten. There it lay mercilessly blocking her path, a broad channel of black water.

For a moment she stood panting hoarsely. To go round to the distant bridge would deprive her of all the advantage she had gained, yet there was nothing else to be done. The only alternative was to spring as far as she could and swim the remainder of the distance. Such a desperate venture would add tenfold to her heroism, and after all, she had run little risk so far.

With these thoughts speeding through her brain, Cicely braced herself for the attempt, retreated a few paces, clenched her teeth, took a run, and thrusting her pole as far out in the "drain" as she could, sprang with all her strength.

It was a great effort, but, alas! the bottom of the "drain" was lined with soft mud three feet deep. Down went the pole under her weight, and landed her with a splash in the middle of the black, stagnant water. Cicely uttered a gurgling gasp, and all the heroism left her as she went under. Then she rose to the sluggish surface, and began a fierce, wild struggle for the opposite bank. In the hideous moments that followed, while she fought the mud and weed, she had no thought of saving her country in the supreme struggle to save herself. If she could only get clear to the other side, anybody could save England for her, and the camp could look after itself.

Bitterly she repented the mad folly that had landed her in this ghastly predicament. Should she ever see home again—her father, her mother, the boys? The weeds wound round her legs were pulling her down; they seemed like demon tentacles dragging their victim to the slimy bottom, and there her poor, drowned body would be hidden, while her dear ones would search and search for her in vain.

At this cruel thought she summoned all her flagging strength to a desperate effort, and caught at some stout reeds near the bank, invisible in the darkness, but offering a firm hold for those clutching hands. These friendly reeds saved her, the mud grew firmer beneath her feet, and in a few seconds she was gripping the grass on the bank, and slowly dragging her exhausted body out of the water.

For a few moments she lay inert. Then opening her eyes she saw the mill sails against the sky only a few hundred yards in front. Her pole was gone, but there were no other dykes to cross. She was safe, she was sound, she had won through, and with a sudden revulsion of feeling she picked herself up, and, streaming with water, continued her way towards the camp.

"Halt—who goes there?" came the sharp challenge of the sentry.

"Friend!" she gasped. "I'm Cicely Creighton—I've come to warn you of danger. Where's Lieutenant Morrison?"

"Here—what's the matter?" said a voice that sent a thrill through her as a tall figure strode up through the gloom. "Why, Miss Creighton, what's wrong?"

"A spy," she panted. "He's coming along the track on foot. He's got a bomb in a bag. A man in a cart gave it to him, just under our wall. He told him to get through the sentries, and go for *you*. I came straight across the dykes to warn you."

As she spoke, the figure of the man with the bag lurched up along the sandy track.

"Halt—who goes there?" rang out the sentry's challenge.

"Ay?" inquired the man, still advancing.

"Stand—or I fire," called the sentry. The man dropped on his knees, and the bag dropped with him.

"There—I knowed I'd get shot," he

"Hands up—what's in that bag?" said Lieutenant Morrison. "Speak, can't you? What's in the bag?"

whimpered. "I telled 'em so! I'm Widder Walter's only son, maister. I beant doin' no 'arm. That's God's truth."

"Hands up—what's in that bag?" said Lieutenant Morrison. "Speak, can't you? What's in the bag?"

"Only the *washing!*" protested the kneeling figure.

"The what!" cried Morrison, turning his electric torch on the spy.

"The officer's washing, maister," whined the man, shrinking back as the light flashed in his face, and revealed to Cicely the homely features of Reuben Walter, a clodhopper from the neighbouring village. "The carrier guved me the bag to bring along, and save 'im the journey, being as he was so busy. But I know'd I'd get a bullet in me—I telled 'im so."

"Open the bag and let me see," said Morrison sternly, and the unhappy Reuben, still on his knees and trembling in every limb, obeyed, and laid out on the short turf shirts, collars, and handkerchiefs, and then shook out the bag to show that nothing remained.

"That will do; now be off," said the Lieutenant, "and come by daylight next time."

Reuben needed no second bidding, and hurried past the grinning sentry, while Morrison, perhaps to hide his own face, stooped down and gathered his belongings together.

Then he turned to where Cicely stood rigid in the moonlight, like a white, wet, and very muddy statue.

"It's turned out all right, you see," he said gravely, "but thank you most awfully for coming. It was a very plucky thing to do. But you *have* got yourself in a state. Why, you're simply drenched!"

"I tried to jump the drain," she said in a thin, expressionless voice, "and I nearly got drowned. The weeds pulled me down in the mud. It was ghastly—and now it's all for nothing."

There was an expression of utter misery in her tragic eyes, and suddenly her white, mud-splashed face began to pucker and twitch, and she burst into tears. For a few moments the storm of mortification and wretchedness overwhelmed her; then she was conscious of the quick pressure of a comforting arm round her wet shoulders, and a tender, tremulous voice saying close to her ear:

"Don't cry, little woman—please don't cry! I think you've done a splendid thing. It *might* have been a spy with a bomb quite easily—and then you would have saved us all."

"But it *wasn't*," sobbed Cicely. "If I'd only stopped to think I might have known. But I was so keen on being a—a—heroine, and now I have only just made a fool of myself instead. But, oh!"—she cried, suddenly clinging to him in frenzied entreaty—"*don't* let anybody know. I should never hear the last of it!"

With quick promises and tender, comforting words he soothed her passionate grief, and then walked home with her through the moonlight. And if that strong khaki arm was still round her as they went it must be remembered she was very shaken and exhausted, and certainly in need of support. At the garden gate they said good-bye in the moonlight.

"Now promise you won't do any more daring things," he said earnestly.

"I promise I'll do nothing more daring than stitching for the wounded soldiers," she answered, with such a new, sweet humility in her voice that he stooped and caught her hands in his.

"And then, after the war," he murmured huskily, looking down into her face, "perhaps—perhaps——"

Cicely looked up into his eyes, and nodded.

"Yes, after the war," she whispered, and slipped away down the garden path.

ONE OF THE "NUTS."

Gilbert was one of the nuttiest "nuts,"
  Till he started to shoulder a gun,
Got his commission and went to the front,
  As *he* said, "to share in the fun."
Gilbert is figuring well in the press,
  Winning distinction eternal,
So it would seem that before very long
  The "nut" will have changed to a Colonel!

D. R.

What about the Business Man?

By A Business Girl

In a recent number of the ROYAL MAGAZINE a Business Man aired his views concerning the business girl. Now it is the business girl's turn, and in this article she gets a little bit of her own back by holding up the business man to good-natured criticism.

"The business girl," wrote a "Business Man" in The Royal recently, "is amazingly adequate, seeing that her life is quite unnatural and artificial."

Alas! It is impossible to return the compliment. The business man is amazingly inadequate, seeing that an office forms, presumably, his natural environment.

He criticises the poor business girl so very freely—in fact, he considers it quite a moot point as to whether he shall allow her even to exist—while, man-like, he regards himself as above criticism, beyond reproach. And yet, if the truth be told, most of the sins of which he accuses his feminine rival can be laid, with equal justice, at his own door.

She may have many drawbacks; she may (I quote his accusations) cover her desk with golliwogs and geraniums, and chatter and eat during office hours; she may even, worst crime of all, fail to read her shorthand notes; (by the way, all business men speak quite distinctly and never mind being interrupted for explanations)—but she is, on the whole, comparatively sane. If there ever existed a man who was even moderately reasonable while at work, he should surely be placed in a glass case in the London Museum! Perhaps that statement is best borne out by a few anecdotes—all perfectly true.

Business men are frequently most unreasonable, as one secretary found, when having in accordance with her employer's instructions looked up a pile of documents, he denied having asked for them.

Business Man (at the 'phone): "Yes, thanks very much. I'll return the others. Yes—good—right. Good-bye."

He flings a bundle of papers at his typist, murmuring:

"Write about those."

The girl does her best, but the Business Man regards the result with an air of injured innocence.

"Miss Jenkins," he remarks at last, with exaggerated patience, "you've missed the whole point of the letter. Didn't you hear him tell me he was sending along the agreement we want in the morning? That's what I want you to confirm."

Now who but a Business Man would consider it part of a secretary's duty to hear *both* sides of a telephone conversation?

In another case a man called a harassed and overworked satellite to his side, and requested her to look out the correspondence with a particular firm concerning some transaction. As the letters were filed according to one of those simple American systems, it took the girl nearly an hour to get together the necessary documents, but at last, flushed with triumph, she hurried back to him. He regarded her with blank amazement.

"What are these?"

"The letters you asked for."

"But I never asked you for any letters—really I should have thought you had enough to do without wasting your time over unnecessary things like that. Why ever should I want them?"

And since she was dependent upon him for her bread-and-butter, the poor girl couldn't even say what she thought of him!

Good-natured teasing is quite another matter, and the girl who openly prides herself on her infallibility will have to swallow her share. There was a man whose work entailed much correspondence anent pictures, and one day he gave his particular paragon a long list of artists to whom certain letters were to be written. She produced the letters in record time, and he looked them through carefully, twice, before remarking gravely:

"But you haven't written to Gainsborough!"

"You never told me to," snapped Miss Cocksure, and then she noticed his expression and had to admit the laugh was on his side that time.

The man who demanded from his secretary the whereabouts of certain estimates which he knew full well were on his desk all the time, undoubtedly deserved that she should wring his neck, and drop him into the waste-paper basket.

Still, no sensible girl minds an incident of that kind; it is only calculated and deliberate annoyance that is hard to forgive. Take, for instance, the man who summoned his secretary and demanded with a scowl the whereabouts of certain estimates for which he had written.

"But," protested the girl, "we could hardly expect them for two or three days, and you only wrote the day before yesterday."

"Nonsense," snapped the man. "Go and look up the letters; it must have been quite a long time ago."

The secretary patiently did as she was told, stifling a sigh the while, for she was in the middle of another job that had to be finished that night, and for particular and private reasons she wished to leave in good time. In due course she proved her point, and the man had to admit that he was wrong. Needless to say, he wasn't in the least apologetic, for he had merely done it to annoy. The estimates were sitting safely on his desk all the time, and he knew it.

"I thought you had forgotten about them," he explained.

Could you blame the girl for wringing his neck and dropping him into the wastepaper basket?

Talking of that useful receptacle recalls another type of "chief" which is farfrom uncommon. It was a certain Miss Smith who was ushering in an important client, when she was transfixed on the threshold by the sight of her worthy employer—a middle-aged man—jumping solemnly round the room with both feet in the wastepaper basket.

"Don't interrupt," he cried breathlessly, "I'm nearly round; I mean to get right back to the fireplace. Look—" but at that point he looked, and perhaps it is kindest to draw a veil over the rest of the scene. Had he been a junior clerk instead of a senior partner, the incident would not have been particularly surprising, for of these individuals anything may be expected.

She was transfixed on the threshold by the sight of her worthy employer . . . jumping solemnly round the room with both feet in the wastepaper basket.

During the summer months it is a favourite pastime of theirs to rub each other's heads in the empty grates, while booby traps galore await the unwary in dark corridors where chiefs are not wont to wander.

One crime in particular of which the business girl is invariably accused is that of decorating her desk with "Billikens" and similar fetishes which offend the official idea of dignity and decorum.

Yet there are few business men who do not indulge in little weaknesses of this kind.

Summed up briefly, the average business man is very unreasonable, very, very thoughtless, and very, very, very babyish. Of course, this is looking at him strictly from the girl employee's point of view. He may have a magnificent brain, he may build up a flourishing firm and make vast sums of money, but she is aware that when it comes to the little, ordinary, everyday details—which, after all, are the things that count—he is just as human and illogical as the rest of the world.

One crime in particular of which the business girl is invariably accused is that of decorating her desk with "Billikens" and similar fetishes

The OKLAHAMA TROT

By

COURTNEY LENNOX

"For the sins that we do by two and two,
We pay for one by one."

Most of us knew the sort of life Claudia Dean had led before, by some amazingly unlucky chance, she had been engaged to come to England to "star" in the new revue at the Sheraton Theatre.

We knew, but by the unwritten code which obtains among chorus girls we made no comment, unless the exchanging of some more than usually meaning glances could be interpreted as such. Possibly that worn old adage about glass-houses appealed to a few amongst us, but in any case we went on the principle of not throwing a brick until one had been directed at ourselves.

She was a beautiful woman, Claudia Dean, with all the surface freshness and verve of a young girl. Artists raved about her wondrously proportioned figure, her perfectly moulded arms, and delicate wrists and hands. Her luxuriant hair was black as the raven's wing, and unusually soft and baby-like; it clung in loving little waves and curls to her small head.

Tall she was, but light as thistle-down, as well she might be since neither brains nor heart added to her weight.

Large, innocent eyes looked out at you from a fringe of dark-brown lashes—eyes too wandering and vague in their glances to be beautiful, was the verdict of a critical woman, but then women are ever severe in their judgment of the looks of another of their sex. Besides, as Claudia would herself inform you upon the first opportunity, she was "just wrapped up in her work, and always thinking about it." Small wonder, therefore, that her eyes should be somewhat elusive and dreamy in their expression.

She was brainless, unscrupulous, and without conscience, and the first always seemed the least forgivable of her failings, but beautiful as the rosy dawn. I have often stared in amazement at her imperious beauty, and I am only a woman.

She knew we were suspicious about her, and we knew she knew we knew, but she was careful to make firm her foothold before baring her claws.

We formed ourselves into what we christened the "Watch and Pray Brigade," and heaven knows we had need for many a silent prayer, for Claudia promised to be the most exasperating mushroom star that ever trod the boards.

One incident which did not add to her popularity occurred during rehearsals.

Rose Holme, a comparative newcomer to the stage, made quite a little hit one day with her small audience, consisting of the author of the piece, the stage manager, musical director, and a few other lesser individuals who were scattered about in the holland-shrouded stalls. Rose had a tiny scene as a cow-girl in the third act, with the second leading man, and in addition to looking quite adorable, she went through her scrap of a part with real taste and dramatic power.

Claudia looked very black at the clapping Rose received, for the small audience so far forgot itself as to applaud the cow-girl scene mildly.

In the chorus we looked at each other. We knew Claudia's rage must find an outlet somehow, and feared that our poor Rose would find herself nipped in the bud.

Our fears proved well-founded, for at the very next rehearsal Claudia calmly read through the little cow-girl part with the disconcerted young actor who had been playing

it with Rose. Poor boy! he was in love with the originator of the part.

Well Claudia read the part, and the author and the producer looked like a couple of thunder-clouds the while. Of course, we are not supposed to know what happened, but there are ways of finding out all one wants to in a theatre, and I guess our version of Claudia's little game is pretty correct.

Certain it is that on the evening of the same day upon which Rose made her small success, Claudia had dined with the owner and financier of the theatre.

The Super-Sam we called him, because there were two Samuels connected with the show. He was an incongruous mixture of worldly wisdom and youthful intolerance, but he had what we called "intermissions" when anything went wrong on the stage, and at such times he appeared more like a raving lunatic than anything we had yet struck. But that he was also a very human fool was left for Claudia to demonstrate to us.

She made him transfer the cow-girl scene from Rose to herself.

"She takes the attention of the audience off me; cut it out or let me do it," she said, and the great little man had yielded to her unreasonable request.

But Claudia was to learn that beauty, and even influence, is not everything. After that first reading of the little part without Rose in it, the producer put his foot down, and the whole stage literally trembled when he did so, for he was a large man with feet in proportion to his size. He firmly refused to go on with the production of the play unless Rose were put back again.

He gave no reasons, and there was not a soul who dared ask him for any. If he left the piece in its present state, it was doomed to failure. There was nothing else for it; Claudia had to "think better" of her request. She did so with what grace she could muster, and Rose went on with the cow-girl stunt.

Ernestine Delmont was the first to show us the way the wind was blowing—a wind which promised to blossom into a raging hurricane for some of us girls later.

"Lambs," said Ernestine, as she fastened the gilt buttons of her long white cloth gaiters one night, preparatory to "going on," "I'll bet you what you like that Cloudy Claudia is going to marry the Super-Sam."

We had all tried to break Ernestine of applying the descriptive adjective before Claudia's name. Ernestine was notoriously indiscreet in her utterances, and her voice was none of the softest.

She had dropped a little bombshell this time.

Why should Sammy marry Claudia? What had he done to deserve it? Then the thought of Claudia as a married woman was too much for the more frivolous, and a silent but expressive smile went from one to the other, proving as infectious as does a yawn in a room full of sleepy people.

We could never be quite sure, and then Sammy went away for six weeks and we thought it was all off. He returned on a Tuesday morning however, and the next morning we were introduced to Claudia in her new *rôle* of Mrs. Super-Sammy.

If she had been trying as Cloudy Claudia, she was nothing less than maddening as the wife of the chief.

She did not retire from the stage, though she might have reckoned upon the most enthusiastic "farewell" ever given to the biggest, brightest star. She had good reason, of course, for her decision, as she explained to the interviewers who crowded round on the scent of a "story" in this sudden, quiet marriage—she was billed and advertised to appear in the new production, and she "couldn't disappoint the dear public; they had always been so lovely to her."

We rehearsed for six weeks, long, hard-working weeks of seven days each, for Sunday was by no means a day of rest at the theatre. Still we all worked with a will, for we were hoping for a long run which would compensate us for all the trials of preparation.

The opening day arrived at last. Everyone was keyed up to a fever heat of excitement and anxiety. Nerves were strained to breaking point. Fixed smiles served to conceal, if not to lighten, the sickening weight of the tension which we all suffered.

Our "Watch and Pray Brigade" lived up to its name that night. I know some who prayed, and many who couldn't pray. Fear closed their throats with a dreadful sensation of choking. We watched the progress of the play, whenever we could, from the wings. Claudia Dean made good. She did her best, and so did every soul in the company, and yet—somehow we just missed fire. We had scored a luke-warm success, and this after all our strenuous weeks of hard and careful work.

Of course, chorus girls' troubles don't count, but we had been working for six weeks without salary, and living mainly on hope and credit. Some girls lived at home

with their people; they were safe anyway. Some of us had been living on such slender savings as we had pinched and scraped to put by against rehearsal or "resting" times.

The show had only been running a week when up went the "Provisional Notice" on the notice-board, and after that the theatre was not a cheerful place.

A rival house had blossomed forth with a new piece well calculated to take what little wind we had out of our sails. Claudia persuaded the Super-Sam to economise, and a dozen chorus girls found themselves outside the theatre with a couple of weeks' pay for eight weeks' hard work.

Fortunately this lot of girls could dance, and they got taken on by the rival show at once; I do not think the Super-Sam was best pleased, then, that he had let them go.

There was a new dance in that rival piece, new over here that is to say, and, as a vivacious young pressman said before he saw the speciality in question, it was "calculated to raise the hair on an Egyptian Mummy." Our own producer grew visibly thinner in his efforts to introduce something into our show that would equal it.

He and the Super-Sam were suffering simultaneously, though not silently, from a more than usually savage paroxysm of despair over that dance, when Claudia spoke suddenly:

"I can dance the rotten thing," she said casually; "I used to know the man who invented the steps. Find me a partner and I can dance it right away," and Claudia expressed a hot little condemnation of the dance in a couple of pungent words.

Had an oil-ship loosed its cargo on the raging billows of an angry deep no greater miracle of calm could have been effected.

Had the producer been a girl he would have powdered his nose tremulously at that critical moment; as it was he wiped his brow softly and slowly with an outrageously coloured silk handkerchief.

Sammy was the first to speak.

"Why, Claudia!" he gasped, "why didn't you tell me before? You know that the Oklahama Trot, in old Pilkey's show over the way, is what is killing us. What on earth? —why?—why? Oh, Claudia!"

Poor man! his voice rose to a tearful quality, in which indignant astonishment, relief, and joy struggled for mastery.

Claudia turned her large, clear eyes upon him and hesitated a little before she answered.

"Because," she said at last, "I hate the whole silly, leg twisting business; you know I never dance if I can help it. But I can do this Oklahama Trot if it is going to save the show here. Find someone to do it with me," and she whisked off to change into a practice skirt.

We had three good men dancers in the company and Claudia tried the Oklahama Trot with each of them in turn, but it was a complicated affair, and perhaps Claudia was not the most patient of teachers. Anyway, they couldn't get on with it, and Claudia expressed her opinion of their ability as dancers without reserve.

Then commenced a quick and systematic search for a male Oklahama Trotter to partner Claudia, but he couldn't be found, and Sammy was on the edge of a nervous breakdown from rage and disappointment

At last, perilously near the end of our week, a shabby man lounged up to the stage door of the Sheraton Theatre.

"Anything doing?" he asked laconically.

The man in the box shook his head.

"Nothing," he replied. "We are full up with stage hands and supers now and they'll all be out of a shop soon."

"Super be blowed," said the stranger languidly. "I'm a principal. What about this Oklahama Trot? That's my speciality."

The door-keeper was galvanised into sudden animation. He eyed his man keenly.

"What did you say?"

His tone was warily alert.

"You heard what I said," returned the other sourly, "but I'll say it again if you like the sound of it: I can dance the Oklahama Trot better'n anyone on this or the other side of eternity. Neither America nor the Continent can produce my equal at Oklahama-ing, so if you want to engage the expert exponent run away and tell your boss. I am slightly in need of a salary," he added, and a grim smile relieved the unshaven face.

The door-keeper stumbled from his retreat and came to the side of the shabby stranger, clutching the discoloured coat-sleeve in his eagerness.

Five minutes later the Super-Sam was interviewing the new arrival in his office at the back of the theatre.

"You are sure you can do it?" he said, nervously reiterating a question which he had already asked more than once, always receiving the same reply.

"There will not be time for any rehearsing if you go on to-night," Sammy continued, "and it's to night or never, for we close down to-morrow unless——"

With panther-like swiftness, his hands were at her throat, that strong, white throat around which glimmered and sparkled her husband's latest gift to her. (Page 341, col. 1)

He checked himself from making any further revelations and went back to the subject in hand.

"My wife, Miss Dean, you know, is making a flying *matinée* visit to the provinces, and she will only just be able to reach the theatre in time to dress and go on."

"I can do it *sure*. Do it with anyone, anywhere, blindfold! I tell you I know the dance better than most people know their prayers. You rely on me; you won't fall far."

Sammy looked at him curiously—his secretary told me the story afterwards.

"Had you a partner?"

"I had a partner," he said shortly.

"Is she get-at-able?" persisted Sammy. "Could one get her—suppose my wife did not care——"

He was going to say "to dance with you," but stopped.

"She is not get-at-able," said the man with a laugh.

He turned as though to leave the office, but came back.

"See here, mister."

His face was pale and his voice harsh.

"I came here to dance, not to give my family history, see? My partner is out!"

He flung his hand away from him with a jerk.

"Out! She's where I'll never meet her I guess—though I'm trying all right. Listen!"

He leant over Sammy and laid his hand on the other's shoulder, and Sammy shrank back at the gross familiarity.

"I want money to find that partner of mine; I'm searchin' for her and some day I'll find her. That's all."

He turned abruptly and walked out of the room.

"Cheerful blighter!" said Sammy, and made arrangements for the night's show. All London was billed and special advertisement space taken in the evening papers to announce the "Original Oklahama Trot."

A little rippling thrill of excited anticipation spread through the theatre when it became known that a partner had been discovered for Claudia, and the dance was to be tried that night.

Hope ran high; this dance might save the piece; anyway, the management would certainly run the play on for a while if the dance was a success.

Claudia was late that night; a breakdown on the line delayed her train just outside London, with the result that the stage was waiting when she arrived. She dashed to her room to make up and change, which she could do with lightning-like rapidity when she chose.

They sent the Oklahama man on to hold the house for the few moments which must elapse before Claudia could be ready. Then as the stage manager snapped over the orchestra light—the signal arranged to announce Claudia's entrance—the man took his position for the dance in which he was to partner her.

I was in the wings watching from the first entrance, just where a little door led through from the stage to the auditorium, and could see and hear all that occurred.

The two stood for a second of time at opposite sides of the stage, poised motionless, each looking back into the wings away from the other. This was the pose for the beginning of the dance. Then a swift turn brought them face to face, and I saw the man stiffen suddenly as though he had received a knife thrust, and his eyes seemed to contract into tiny pin-points of fire.

He stepped back a pace involuntarily. Claudia was obliged to do the same, to keep time and steps equal. I could not see her face, but her usually careless, buoyant carriage did not falter; her mind was on the dance.

A stealthy cat-like stride was bringing the dancers together. The man, smiling now, threw wide his arms to her, and she, following the *motif* of the dance, sprang lithely into them.

Then began a rapid, complicated figure, and suddenly the man spoke, softly, caressingly almost.

"You do not remember me, honey?"

Claudia threw a startled and indignant glance at him, but something held her gaze; she turned ghastly pale beneath her make-up, and her whole figure seemed to shrink.

"Ah! you have a good memory after all—I see you have. It's years since you left me, honey—all alone."

Claudia dropped in his arms; the man was almost lifting her through the dance. It was not like Claudia to turn faint at anything less than death itself. Perhaps she saw it in that moment. Who knows?

"Dance, I tell you," snarled the man. "You haven't forgot my teachin' have you? Every step, as I thought of it, we practised together—how long ago? Then you went away and I was alone. Yes, quite alone, honey-bunch—the little one died that night. You always hated death and sickness, so you saved your feelings a lot by going. I was

helpless in my bed, you recollect? I couldn't do much for the poor mite. I struggled to get to her, but I fell short of the cot. They found me there next morning, but the baby was dead."

The orchestra was hushed to a lingering, stately measure to suit the passing mood of the dance; presently it would quicken to a brutal finish. It was this crudely passionate ending which never failed to "bring down the house" and fill it with a wave of enthusiastic applause. This happened nightly at the rival show. If our dance was better, or as good as theirs, we were safe.

Claudia was dancing now, her beautiful teeth showing in an immovable smile, her eyes filled with staring horror.

The Oklahama man was whispering again in her ear.

"We will cut out the figures when you leave my arms; I could not bear to lose you after so long a parting. I recovered, you see. Your calculation was wrong; I was tougher than you thought me. But what of that poor chap you went away with, honey? I felt sorry for him when I heard how he spent all he had for you, and then stole to satisfy your whim. His time is not up yet, but he's broken, sure. Then young Rane. Yes, I heard of him, too. He shot himself, poor, funny thing, when he found his honey was anybody's girl."

The relentless voice went on, and Claudia's eyes never left the man's face.

"Do you remember little Harley, of Pennsylvania? I guess he's pretty nigh broke his mother's heart, and ruined himself for you. He's in a lunatic asylum. You didn't know? Ah, I should have broken it more gently.

"You danced the Oklahama Trot all through America. I heard of you often. Did you ever think of me, I wonder?"

Turning, stepping, gliding, this way and that, always he told her—against her will at times it seemed; against her will it surely was.

The passionate tenacity expressed in the man's dancing was less—or was it more?—than human; he was like a watchful hunter stalking his game, but one who can afford to wait—sure of his mark, certain of capture.

The end came quickly. The music, suddenly stirring to madness, gave the cue for the final movement.

One moment he was on his knee at her feet, holding the hem of her gown; the next, with panther-like swiftness, his hands were at her throat, that strong, white throat, around which glimmered and sparkled her husband's latest gift to her.

There came a few quick gestures; the dainty head was flung limply from his hands, and the last despairing pose of the dance showed a slender figure drooped with realistic lifelessness across the man's arm and shoulder as he half knelt to support it.

The huge audience showed their appreciation in round after round of wild applause.

Behind a hastily lowered curtain the man from Oklahama was speaking quietly.

"Send for the police," he said; "I have killed my wife."

A CURIOUS FACT.

When Edwin asks me out to dine—
Tho' drawn the oft-convivial cork—
He uses, like all staider folk,
A knife and fork.

But when he takes a pretty girl
To tea, I can't help noting soon
How infinitely he prefers
A spoon!

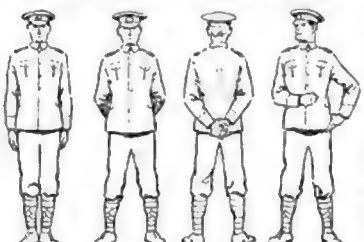
Gwen Nisbet.

Drill without Drudgery

By a Sergeant-Instructor.

This article is intended to help Recruits, Special Constables, Members of Training Corps, and others learning Squad Drill. I hope and believe the illustrations will save much wear and tear on the tempers of instructors and the nerves of instructed.—Ed. R.M.

Drill is intended to make men "nippy," and they should never allow themselves to go to sleep over it, or wander through the various formations. Of course, keen men will drill better than slackers, but, other things being equal, the quality of the drill depends on the way in which commands are given. "Indistinct and slovenly commands," says "Infantry Training," "beget slovenly movements, and must be avoided." Much depends on the "bite" they put into your commands.



ATTENTION STAND AT—EASE STAND EASY

The position of *Attention* is: Heels together and in line. Feet turned out at an angle of 45°. Knees straight. Body erect and carried evenly over thighs. Shoulders level and square to the front. Chest in its natural position—no straining. Arms hanging easily, as straight as their natural bend will allow; thumbs immediately behind seams of trousers. Hands partially closed, and backs of fingers touching thighs lightly, thumb close to forefinger. Head balanced evenly on neck, and eyes looking straight to the front, their own height.

Stand At Ease. Keeping legs straight, carry left foot twelve inches to left, resting weight of body evenly on both feet. At the same time, carry hands behind back and place back of one in palm of the other, grasping it lightly (which hand is immaterial).

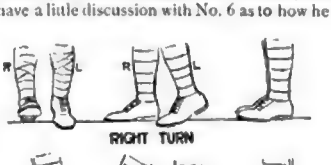
Stand Easy. A man may move limbs, head, and body, but not his feet, otherwise he will lose his dressing.

A command consists of the cautionary word and the executive word. The cautionary word warns you that the executive word is coming, and will be pronounced distinctly; the executive word will be yapped out to inspire a smart movement. So, in the command *Form—Fours*, *Form* is the cautionary word, *Fours* the executive, and it will be pronounced:

Form—*Fours*.

If ever you are asked to drill a squad, don't be afraid of your own voice. Remember, an officer drilling his men doesn't follow them about; he should be able to make himself heard easily at a distance of two hundred yards.

Always explain movements most carefully before giving a command. You can't expect men to do what they don't understand. Never get into conversation with them, nor have a little discussion with No. 6 as to how he



RIGHT TURN

ABOUT TURN

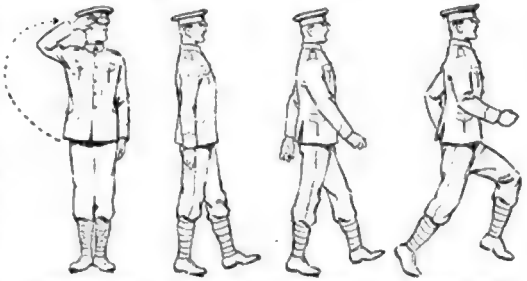
Right Turn. (This is illustrated in three movements for clearness, but is done in two.) One: turn to the right on the right heel and left toe, raising the left heel and right toe in doing so. Two: Bring the left heel smartly up to the right without stamping. The *Left Turn* is the reverse of the right, and is made by turning on the left heel and right toe.

A *Right* or *Left Incline* is half a *Right* or *Left Turn*, and made in the same manner.

About Turn. This is made in the same manner as the *Right Turn*, except that it describes a half instead of a quarter circle. *It is always made to the right.*

thought you meant him to do something you never said anything about.

When you are being drilled, give every particle of your attention to the instructor. You will need it all, and he does not find it amusing to repeat an explanation six times, because squad drill is very deadly for the instructor, who probably has been imparting it for many weary years. Get into the habit from the outset of keeping yourself strung up to a pitch of readiness, well-balanced, and able to jump to any command, no matter what. If you watch the Guards drilling you will see a sort of preliminary tremor pass over a man before the actual command is out of the non commissioned officer's mouth.



Right-Hand Salute. One: Bring the right hand, smartly, with a circular motion, to the head, palm to the front, fingers extended and close together, one inch above right eye, or touching edge of peak of cap, elbow in line and nearly square with shoulder, chin in line with left shoulder. Two: Cut away the arm smartly to the side (noiselessly).

In the illustration the man is saluting an officer passing on his left. A left-hand salute is performed similarly with the left-hand, and looking to the right. Saluting to the front is always performed with the right hand.

The *Slow March* is only used for ceremonial. In *Slow Time* and *Quick Time* the pace is 30 inches, 75 and 125 paces to the minute respectively. In *Double Time* the pace is 40 inches, 180 paces to the minute.

Mark Time. The time is continued without advancing by raising each foot alternately about 6 inches, keeping the feet almost parallel to the ground, knees raised to front, arms steady at the sides.

Nothing but practice will produce smart work, and if you are unable to attend every drill of your Training Corps or Special Constables, fill in odd moments by practising movements. The whole secret of drill is balance, and if a man has not brought his body well under control by physical exercises, he will never be really good.

Here are a few common faults committed by recruits:

In coming to attention, men imagine they ought to throw a chest, which is incorrect, and when endeavouring to do so bring the abdomen into undue prominence. A natural carriage should be aimed at, with the body well-balanced over the thighs, and the head well-balanced on the neck.

In standing at ease recruits *will* not carry the left leg twelve paces to the left, and balance the body on both legs equally. They carry the left leg a little forward, and allow it to be limp and flabby. That is not the way to produce a correctly dressed rank when they spring to attention.

The about-turn floors most people, the tendency being to fall over. This, again, is a question of balance; the man with well-controlled leg-muscles can do it, and the man without can't.

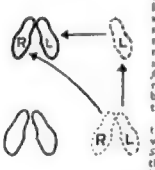
Try to keep your dressing when wheeling to the right or left. It isn't so hard as you imagine, if only the inside man, on whom the rest are pivoting, will step short and give the outer men a chance to swing round. Study the illustration below, and you will realise how much depends on this.

Right Wheel (in fours). The inner man of the leading four will move round a quarter of the circumference of a circle having a radius of 4 feet, stepping short to enable the other men to wheel with him. When the quarter circle is completed the four leads on in the new direction.

(This illustration has been designed to impress on beginners the necessity for the inner man to step short. Compare the ground he has to cover with that of the left flank man, and this is obvious. If he doesn't, the left flank man will never catch him without double.' The dressing of the ranks should be preserved exactly during a right or left wheel. A left wheel is made to the left in the same manner.)

This page explains the art of forming fours at the halt, including various stumbling blocks for the recruit. Try working it out with pins stuck into blotting paper.

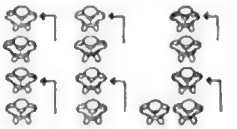
FORM-



Forming Fours. Here we commence with a squad in line, in two ranks, at the halt. The illustration shows a squad of uneven number, so that there cannot be the same number of men in both ranks. In such a case there is a *blank file* in the rear rank—i.e., a man missing—and the blank file is always the third from the left.

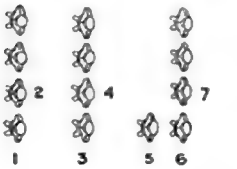
Having got his men in two ranks, the instructor will give the command: *Squad—number!* When the front rank has numbered, on the command:

FOURS'



Form—Fours, the even numbers of both ranks will take a pace of 30 inches back with the left foot, and then a side pace of 27 inches with the right, so as to cover the odd numbers, bringing up the left heel smartly to the right heel. The diagram shows exactly how the foot work is done.

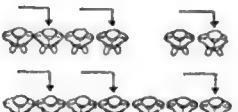
'RIGHT'



Odd numbers stand fast and even numbers move, with one exception. The left flank men *always* move. In the illustration there are 7 men in the front rank, so No. 7 has to move, being the left-flank man. In such a case, the even number next him—in this case No. 6—stands fast. Notice the blank file behind No. 5.

Let us imagine the instructor gives the command, *Right.* The squad will immediately turn to the right in fours, as in the illustration. Now comes the great bugbear of recruits.

'LEFT-TURN'

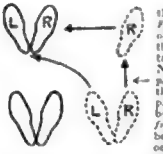


The instructor gives the command, *Left-Turn.* This brings the men back, facing the same way as at the commencement, and is intended as a catch, for this reason: whenever a squad in fours gets the word—*Turn* (except from flank to flank), the men must at once form two deep, on completing the turn, without a further command. To form two deep, the even numbers take a side pace with the left foot and a pace forward with the right, bringing up the left heel smartly to the right heel. The illustration marked *Left-Turn* shows the result. The squad is now as it started.

'ABOUT-TURN'

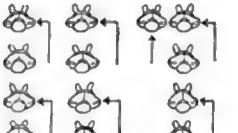
The instructor next gives the word, *About-Turn*, when the blank file will, after turning about, take two paces forward, in order to fill up the leading rank. Remember that now the rear rank is temporarily in front, but it is still the rear rank in theory. The squad is now in a position to be trapped again, thus:

FORM-

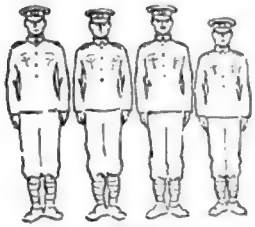


The instructor gives the word once more, *Form—Fours.* On the face of it, the recruit imagines the even numbers will take a pace to the rear. Not so. They take a pace to the front with the right foot and a side pace with the left, bringing themselves *in front* of their odd numbers. The blank file takes one pace forward to complete the leading rank.

FOURS'



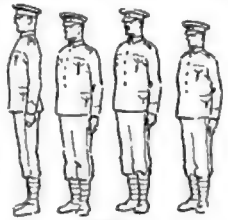
The reason is that, the squad being turned about, the *leading* rank is still, in theory, the rear rank. Consequently, the even numbers take a pace *forward* to bring them on to the same ground as they would occupy by taking a pace *backward* if they were facing the other way, and a rear rank in fact. They will form two deep by taking a side pace to the right with the right foot, and a pace to the rear with the left.



RIGHT—

If a squad in single rank receives the command *At the Halt—Right-Form*——

Never be afraid of making mistakes at the start. Everybody makes them, always has done, and always will, and it is by mistakes that we learn. However a sergeant hounds you on, remember that he once knew as little as you. Even officers sometimes bungle their words of command, and I have seen a most experienced non-com. bring a squad in two ranks up against a line of railings and give the command: "*At the Halt—Right Form!*" It is true he had suffered much at their hands previously.



FORM

——The right-hand man will make a full turn in the required direction and the remainder a half turn——

Two things seem entirely beyond most recruits: one is to step off with the left foot on the word "*Quick-March,*" and the other is to turn to the right on the word "*About-Turn.*"

I will guarantee that in any average lot of recruits half will step off with the right foot on the command: "*By the Right, Quick-March.*" As a matter of fact, "By the Right" simply means that the men will take up their dressing from the right, and that the right is the directing flank. It has nothing to do with which foot shall lead off, because one always leads off with the left foot.

There is no such thing as a left-about-turn.

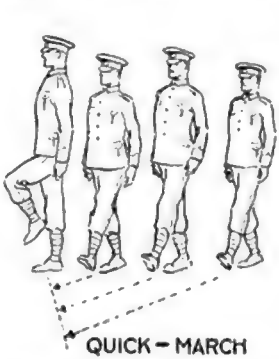
When marching, remember to keep your head and body erect, and your shoulders level and square to the front. The arms should swing naturally from the shoulder, the right arm forward with the left leg, and the left arm with the right. Swing the legs from the hip-joint, and not from the knee. It is those big thigh-muscles, whose existence many civilians never seem to realise, that ought to do the work.

Unless proceeding along a road in column of route—that is, in fours—always choose some stationary object (not a grazing cow, for example), and march on that, particularly if you are on the extreme of the directing flank. It is the only method enabling a man to keep a straight course, particularly as, even if you are not the directing file, you are not expected to keep glancing to the left or right, as the case may be, in order to preserve your dressing.

Some people like squad drill, others find it exceedingly dull. If you take to it, so much the better; but if not, remember that it is the soldier's grammar, and that on it is based every other kind of drill. The more quickly you master it, the faster you will get on to platoon, company, and battalion drill.

Above all, don't be too eager to leave the recruit squad. More advanced men will not thank you for tying them up in knots, and you must walk before you can run.

Whenever they have a chance recruits should drill one another just for practice. It also helps them to sympathise with the instructor.



QUICK—MARCH

——At the word *Quick-March* the right-hand man will mark time, and he and the remainder will halt when they come up in the new alignment.

LOVE In The LIMELIGHT

By Bernard Parsons.

The methods of the lover on the stage vary as much as do those of lovers in ordinary life. The following article deals with the theatrical wooing of popular actors who are experts in the art of stage love-making.

There is tenderness and sincerity about Mr. Dennis Eadie's wooing, and his love passages with Miss Gladys Cooper, in *Peggy and Her Husband*, were quite delightful.

In frivolous comedy there is no more graceful wooer than Mr. Dennis Eadie, whose most characteristic mode of courtship may perhaps be described as that of the well-groomed man about town, well endowed with this world's goods and assuredly not over-burdened with the worries and troubles inseparable from business.

One of this clever actor's most fervent admirers among the fair sex tells me that his charm as a stage-lover lies, from the point of view of a woman, in the fact that he makes love just like a mere man—with a little fun, a little tenderness, the requisite amount of earnestness to add sincerity to his suit, and a proposal at the finish. "He is so very natural about it all," she said, and, as an afterthought, added:

"If I were very poor, which, thank heaven, I am not, as a stage-lover I should always say 'yes' to Mr. Eadie, for his methods of love-making, to me, never suggest anything less economical than a house in Mayfair, a moor in Scotland, and a villa on the Riviera."

Mr. Gerald du Maurier provides an example of the restrained type of stage-lover. He wins the heroine not so much by the ardour of his passion as by its deep-running, well-bred restraint. There is something of diffidence about it, but never for an instant are you in doubt of its sincerity. And when the declaration is made, and the heroine says "yes," you feel certain that the future—in

the play—has nought but happiness for both.

Matinée girls are entranced with the love-making of Gerald du Maurier, and for good reason.

"There is something cool and calculating in the expression of his affection," a feminine admirer of his told me when I asked her why of all stage-lovers Gerald du Maurier appealed most to her. "One instinctively feels when she wins him that the heroine has conquered someone who has made resistance, and who does not wear his heart on his sleeve. And there is satisfaction in gaining a thing which is hard to win. At all times, too, he is frank and sincere, and when he makes love, I as a woman, feel that his love is the real thing, and not a mere spurious stage imitation."

Although Mr. Hayden Coffin has not been seen recently in musical comedy as frequently as his countless feminine followers must have wished, he still retains a very high place indeed in the list of musical comedy lovers. It seems a long time since he first took London by storm with "Queen of My Heart," but Mr. Coffin grows no older, and, given a part which suits his particular talents, he still has few equals and fewer superiors as a lover in what Mr. Paul Rubens tersely calls the tunes and jingles class of entertainment.

"The reason why so many women admire Hayden Coffin as a wooer," a lady lover of musical comedy declared, "can be summed up quite easily—he suggests romance. His symbols of passion are tense features and eloquent silences. But his silences often speak louder than his words."

Robert Loraine is a disciple of the tempestuous, breezy love-making school. When this actor-soldier-aeronaut goes a-wooing the full blood of pent-up passion is let loose. His love-making is the kind that carries the heroine completely off her feet at the outset, and renders her his helpless victim.

Mr. Robert Loraine's most characteristic methods of courtship have never been better exemplified than in Mr. Bernard Shaw's ultra-modern comedy, *Man and Superman*.

"If I were on the edge of a precipice I would hold you fast and jump," he said to Miss Pauline Chase. "I hold the whole world in my arms when I grasp you."

To hear Mr. Loraine speak

Restraint is the keynote of Mr. Gerald du Maurier's love making, as was shown in his love scenes with Miss Enid Bell, in *The Dail of Egypt*.

Sir George Alexander is to many people the ideal stage-lover, and the sincerity which characterises his methods was never more apparent than in *Bella Donna*, when he acted with Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

these lines is to be handed the key of his success as a stage-lover. He effects his purpose by sheer force of personality; his protestations of love burst forth with the suddenness of a storm in the Southern Seas.

Among stage-lovers Sir George Alexander for many years past has taken—and still takes—a high place. He is, perhaps, at his best in romance, although, curiously enough, many of his most popular love scenes have occurred in modern comedy.

To the feminine mind, Sir George Alexander's characteristic method of wooing ever makes an irresistible appeal by reason of its sincerity—the real secret of the stage-lover lies largely in one word, sincerity—and earnestness. Some men court a woman as if they were offering her a prize of inestimable value; others treat the woman as a goddess and beg only to be allowed to burn incense at her feet.

Among the "others" Sir George Alexander surely excels.

"His love-making on the stage," an enthusiastic lady theatre-goer asserted not long ago, "always conjures up to my mind the picture of a mother gazing at a lock of her dead child's hair. It is so infinitely precious, so very, very sad—and there is so little of it. He seems to steal a woman's heart out of her bosom like a plaintive melody, and yet over all his love-making there is a reserve of perfect refinement which cannot but give his passion added glamour in the eyes of the heroine."

Of romantic lovers special mention must be made of Mr. Lewis Waller, who is almost invariably seen at his best in costume plays As a stage-wooer Mr. Waller breaks down all barriers surrounding feminine hearts by the very vigour and forcefulness of his character.

I once asked a member of that very short-lived society, the "Keen Order of Wallerites," why she found pleasure in waiting for hours in a queue outside the pit to see Mr. Waller in a play in which she had already seen him a dozen or more times. Her reply at once gave away the real secret of this gallant actor's success as a stage-lover.

"The twentieth-century man's protestations of love always strike me as being tainted with a note of femininity," was her reply, "but Mr. Waller makes love like a real man. He's the only actor on the stage who recalls to me those romantic days of years ago when a man regarded it as a privilege to lay down his life for the woman he loved, if need to do so should arise. To me he appeals as the very personification of forceful virility."

Whether it is better for an actor actually to feel the love that he makes to a woman on the stage has always been a moot question.

Aubrey Boucicault once said, when asked

whether he was really as much enamoured of a certain young lady with whom he was playing a particularly stirring love scene as he seemed to be:

"Heavens, no! If I were really in love with her I'd be so awkward telling her that the audience would hiss me off the stage."

Mr. Arthur Bourchier's love-making suggests to the feminine mind the rugged man of business, and his most characteristic stage proposal is after the manner of a man who has hitherto had little time to concern himself with the affairs of the heart.

"With him courtship as a rule strikes me as a business proposition," said one of his devoted feminine admirers. "He's the solid, practical man of affairs, who is not given to saying quite all he feels, but is, nevertheless, quite as much in earnest as if he were a romantic and not merely a practical lover searching for a wife to share his loneliness.

"I always feel," she continued, "that Mr. Bourchier as a lover must make a stronger appeal to that part of the theatre-going public which pays for stalls and boxes than to the pit and gallery. Why? Simply because he represents a type that they meet daily.

"Can I think of anyone in real life who would make love quite like Mr. Bourchier? Yes, a thousand times yes—almost any really nice bachelor who has made his own way in life by sheer hard work and by his own individual effort. Mr. Bourchier's methods as a lover strike me irresistibly as those of the business-man—and as a husband—well, I somehow always feel that one of his most popular hobbies would be repeatedly to double his wife's dress allowance."

If all his many admirers entertain a similar view of the effect that marriage would have

Mr. Arthur Bourchier is rather earnest than romantic, but his style is very effective, as all who saw him in *Ri-ß King Hal* will confess.

upon him, it seems probable that the only reason why riots are not continually taking place outside the stage-door of

Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

There is a manliness about Mr. Bertram Wallis' courtship that appeals to the feminine mind. Little wonder that Miss Lily Elsie found him irresistible when she played the heroine in *The Count of Luxemburg*.

every theatre at which he appears, can be that it is well known that Mr. Arthur Bourchier is already a married man.

Few leading musical comedy artists have sprung into fame with quite such lightning rapidity as Mr. Bertram Wallis, whose striking "Staircase" dance with Miss Lily Elsie in *The Count of Luxemburg* will live in the memory of lovers of musical comedy. Standing well over six feet, and with a martial bearing which strongly suggests that Mr. Wallis is a keen lover of outdoor life, this clever actor and singer is now beyond all manner of doubt one of the biggest draws on the musical comedy stage among stage-lovers.

Why is it that the queue at the early doors of any theatre at which Mr. Wallis is appearing so frequently consists very largely of members of the fair sex? During the long run of *The Count of Luxemburg* I once met a girl just out of her teens who had been to see the play no fewer than twenty-three times.

"I hope to go twenty-three times more," she said, "if only just to see Mr. Wallis. He strikes me as quite the most appealing musical comedy stage-lover I've ever seen. Some musical comedy lovers are so fearfully effeminate. They look as if they are wondering all the time they are acting whether their hair is quite as smooth as it ought to be, whether they have precisely the right number of buttons on their waistcoat, whether their make-up is quite perfect, and so forth.

"But Mr. Wallis is so different in this respect. He always looks handsome, well-groomed, and acts delightfully. At the same time he never seems the least bit in the world self-conscious. He's always so manly, too, and whenever I see him act I can also in my imagination picture him just as quiet, cool, and undaunted in times of danger, as he is in the parts he plays on the stage.

"If I were a producer of musical comedies I should tell every musical stage-lover to study Bertram Wallis' methods on the stage—and them tell them to go and do likewise."

That most mercurial of actors, Mr.

Seymour Hicks, is a stage-lover of quite a different sort. He is a wooer whose passion is as expressive as a dynamite bomb. He is full of ardour and action. He is, at heart, the schoolboy, and whether he be a Middy in *Sweet and Twenty* or a young Duke in *The Catch of the Season*, all the time there is a twinkle of mischief in his eyes, a keen sense of the true enjoyment of the whole thing, and an unmistakable suggestion of animal spirits that prove irresistible to the maiden he courts.

A middle-aged woman once told me that when she saw Seymour Hicks make love on the stage she felt a girl once again. On the other hand, a mere bread-and-butter miss, who has lived for the greater part of her life in the country and who has only once been to a London theatre, a woman in the chrysalis stage, in fact, to whom almost all ordinary things in life are mysteries, told me that on her one and only visit to the theatre she had been to *The Catch of the Season*.

"Do you know," she said, "although I'm not yet 'out,' Seymour Hicks made me feel that I was really quite grown-up—he made love just like an overgrown schoolboy would do on his second time on earth."

To the experienced feminine theatre-goer, however, Seymour Hicks as a stage-lover apparently makes still another different sort of appeal. He is the modern young man, the young man we all know in real life who goes in to win by his eloquence, and while the heroine must listen to eloquent words, somehow or other they have the true ring.

Perhaps, too, many of this tempestuous stage-lover's admirers have not forgotten that Mr. Hicks' marriage with Miss Ellaline Terriss was in the nature of a run-away wedding, and so, maybe, they feel that they are getting a glimpse of romance in real life in an unromantic age.

So long as a stage-lover's voice softens into music, so long as his eyes are a caress, to the feminine mind his words will ever turn themselves into poetry, and whether he embraces the heroine or not, when he seizes her in his arms and pours forth torrents of burning vows into her ear, so long will women realise that they are beholding the art of stage-wooing at its best.

The actor who thoroughly masters the art of making love on the stage will never want for work.

Photo Fairbairn & Hoes ltd.

Mr. Seymour Hicks carries his high spirits and dashing ways into the court of Cupid. In *Dr. Id Garrick* he laid siege to Miss Ellaline Terriss' heart in a way few women could resist.

PHILIPSONS' FOOTBALL MATCH

The Tale of a Sporting Experiment.

By J. P. Loughnan.

I suppose most people in the civilised world have heard of Philipsons' Stores; you can buy anything that's worth having there, and the assistants are courtesy itself. I mention this last point in case you happened to witness our firm's football match the other day. That was an exceptional occasion, and you must not judge our manners from the events of that unhappy afternoon.

Young Marley, of the groceries department, made the suggestion while we were at tea one day. He suggested that we should get up a Rugby football match amongst ourselves, and play it out one early-closing day on a ground which he said he could borrow. I don't for a moment suppose the idea would have caught on had not Miss Filander, of the hosiery counter, eagerly backed up the proposal. She said it would be splendid fun, and that she and all the other girls would come and cheer us on. That did it, because so many of the fellows were keen about Miss Filander, you see.

There still remained a few difficulties in the way, however, the principal one being that none of us, except young Marley, had ever played Rugby before in our lives. But Philipsons' men are not easily beaten, so it was decided to hold a few practices before the actual game came off, and, meanwhile, everyone bought a copy of the "Laws of Rugby Football," which they studied in their spare time.

For some reason, the field practices were not very well attended, but our fellows made up for that by energetic home experiments. You would meet men in Philipsons' corridors frowning thoughtfully and muttering to themselves: "A drop-kick is made by letting the ball fall from the hands and kicking it as it rises," or—"A place-kick is made by kicking the ball after it has been placed on the ground for that purpose."

It must have been during an effort to execute one of these manœuvres that Dibbles, the grocery messenger, sent a smoked ham through the window of the pay-desk one evening. Mr. Philipson Senior was awfully angry about it.

The details of the match were threshed out at a general meeting held on Sunday morning after breakfast. It was decided that the match should be played between teams representing the Provisions (or Perishables) Department and the Drapery Counters. The composition of the sides was rather difficult, so many of the staff having already passed their first youth, but old Beech, of the Draperies, made some sensible suggestions on this point.

"A study of the rules," said old Beech, addressing the meeting, "tells me that a Rugby team consists of fifteen men, eight of whom play in what is called the scrummage, while the remaining seven stand outside and wait for the ball to be handed to them. I therefore propose that the younger gents be put into the scrummage, while their elders and betters stand outside and wait for the ball."

This proposal was carried without dissent, except that Dibbles was heard to murmur something about "giving old B. 'elders and betters' if he ever got hold of him with the ball."

The next question that came up was the matter of our costumes, and here, again, old Beech was to the fore. He said he was gratified to be able to announce that Mr. Philipson Senior had consented to let us have a job line of football jerseys at special trade prices. He, therefore, moved that the

It must have been during an effort to execute one of these manœuvres that Dibbles, the grocery messenger, sent a smoked ham through the window of the pay-desk one evening.

Draperies team appear in colours and the Perishables in white.

Mr. Snoffham, of the Perishables, suggested that it would be fairer to toss up for the colours, but Mr. Merryline, Draperies, supported old Beech, and Bobby, their messenger, who had carried the jerseys downstairs and declared the colours to be a fair treat, also had the impudence to put in his spoke.

What looked like developing into a row was finally ended by Miss Filander, who said that all athletes appeared more manly in plain white. Whereupon Mr. Snoffham promptly accepted old Beech's proposal, amid smiles from the Perishables, who felt they had scored the first try, as Rugby people would say. Young Marley then informed the meeting that he could obtain the services of a Rugby Union referee, and the match was fixed to come off upon the following Thursday afternoon.

The morning of the eventful day was a bit dark and cloudy, but a light sun showed up later on, and by the time Philipsons' shutters were up the weather was still dry. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same for the ground. It was covered with a layer of thickish brown mud, through which the grass struggled in patches here and there, while there was just the suspicion of a puddle at more than one point.

Philipsons' girls kept their word like little bricks, and every one of them was to be seen behind the ropes that inclosed the playing pitch. Mr. Philipson and his son also put in an appearance, so that we really felt on our mettle as we changed into our playing togs.

The Draperies team was ready first, and old Beech immediately led them out on to the field, where they were greeted with shrieks of delight from the onlookers. They certainly were well worth looking at. Old Beech himself, who is not thin, wore a crimson jersey with a large white star on the left breast; his pants were blue and a bit tight; his stockings black. He walked at the head of his men, puffing with pride like a turkey gobbler.

Mr. Merryline followed. He is tall and lean, and his jersey was yellow with black stripes. His white pants came down right over the knees, covering the tops of his stockings, which were Dreadnought grey. Mr. Grover was in pale blue, with stockings

When Messrs. Merryline and Grover caught him by the heels and began dragging him, face downward, through the mud, he still retained his hold.

to match. He had cut down a pair of old trousers, which hung in a ragged hem round his bony knees. Mr. Larkson sported a salmon-pink blouse — I mean shirt—and looked very handsome in his neat flannel pants, brown stockings, and bright yellow boots. Of the rest, Bobby was perhaps the smartest in a green-and-white jersey and white pants.

Of course, our team could not compete with the others as regards jerseys, but we'd raked the shop for stockings, and in this respect we resembled a travelling rainbow. Supporters of the Perishables sent up a shout like thunder as we stepped out from the pavilion and marched to our appointed places.

Mr. Snoffham had won the toss for us, so Mr. Merryline prepared to kick off for them. First, he excavated a big hole in the centre of the field with his heel. Then he carefully lodged up the ball in this hole, at an acute angle, so that it was pointing at us, after which he went back several paces. Our forwards, drawn up in line opposite him, watched these preparations sternly. The whistle now sounded, and, dashing up to the ball, Mr. Merryline made a furious kick at it.

The leather sped through the air for about ten yards like a bullet, and struck Mr. Snoffham in the centre of the body with a loud thud. Mr. S. immediately subsided on to his back, without speaking, and remained where he had fallen, groaning slightly. The ball, meanwhile, rebounded into the arms of Mr. Larkson, who came rushing straight for the Perishables at full speed. Young Marley, however, quickly seized Mr. L. round the legs, and the couple plunged headlong to earth, to the accompaniment of ringing cheers from the delighted spectators.

A scrummage was now formed, and both sets of forwards began pushing like mad, but the Draperies were the heavier pack, and soon they began to drive us back, despite our fiercest endeavours. It was at this point that our Mr. Wix endeavoured to stem the tide by falling on the ball, which he clasped affectionately to his bosom, and refused to release. Under the weight of several opponents he lay thus manfully clinging to the leather, and even when Messrs. Merryline and Grover caught him by the heels and began dragging him, face downward, through the mud, he still retained his hold.

The girls on the touch lines were shrieking "Shame!" and "Brutes!" The referee was blowing his whistle like fury. Old Beech,

from his position at full-back on the other side, was howling all sorts of threats, and, in fact, everyone seemed to be preparing for a free fight.

Then the referee's voice rang out above the general tumult. "Free kick to the Colours!" he shouted. "The man is lying on the ball!"

"What d'ye mean?" gasped Wix, spitting the mud out of his mouth, as Merryline and Grover dropped his legs. "I wasn't lying at all!"

"Don't argue with me, sir, or I'll order you off the field!" snapped the referee unsympathetically. "Free kick here for the Colours."

Wix did not attempt to continue the argument. He merely moved over to the touchline, where Miss Jones, of the canned meat department, tried to restore his eyesight with a handkerchief, the mud being very sticky, you comprehend.

Snoffham had recovered his wind about the same time that Wix returned to the fray, and we Perishables were making a better fight of it by then. We had worked the ball close up to the other goal, and Mr. Sam Vaught would undoubtedly have scored for us, if he hadn't dived headfirst into one of the goal-posts. This mishap cost us a certain try, and gave Mr. V. a big bruise on the forehead. Of course he dropped the ball, and old Beech picked it up, and eased the pressure with a good kick.

When the ball came in from touch again a slight unpleasantness between Mr. Snoffham and Mr. Merryline caused these two gentlemen to withdraw from the game for a time. Shaking their fists in each others' faces, they disputed fiercely together, but the argument was cut short by the unexpected return of the ball, which took poor old Merryline in the nape of the neck and sent him sprawling at the feet of Miss Filander.

Several spirited attempts to score failed to materialise between now and half-time. Once old Beech got the ball near his own line, and waddled as far as the centre with it. Nobody could catch him—they were all too dead-beat—and so was the old chap himself, after that sprint. When he came up to our full-back he collapsed, and allowed our Mr. Browne to sit on his head until the other players arrived, without a murmur.

When the whistle sounded for the interval each man dropped where he stood, except the two messengers and young Marley. Five minutes' rest, however, worked wonders. We had found our second wind when the second half opened.

Our opponents' coloured jerseys had by now assumed the hue of a post-impressionist masterpiece, and whenever we formed a scrummage the steam from the overheated

The leather slipped treacherously off the toe of his boot, flying with tremendous force and deadly precision into the face of old Beech [Page 356, col. 1.]

players rose up to the heavens like smoke from a battlefield. It was also noticeable that when the game reached the neighbourhood of Miss Filander there was a lot more unpleasantness between the sides than at any other spot on the field. The fact was that several fellows were out to win the good opinion of that young lady, and she didn't make matters better by cheering us on indiscriminately.

"Poor Mr. Snoffham!" she would cry, as that gentleman took an involuntary header into some adjoining puddle; or—"Plucky little Bobby!" when the Draperies' messenger caught Sam Vaught by the ankle, precipitating his infuriated opponent into four and a half inches of brown slime.

Once Merryline burst clean away with the ball, and made what would have been a splendid run, only that he lost his head, and dashed in amongst the spectators. It was bad luck that he chanced to go full tilt into Mr. Philipson Senior's new waistcoat. If the old gentleman could only have recovered his breath in time, I believe Merryline would have got sacked on the spot.

At another juncture Larkson took a free kick quite close to where Miss Filander stood. Determined to distinguish himself, and murmuring grimly, "A punt is made by letting the ball fall from the hands and kicking it before it touches the ground," he tried to do so. But, alas! the leather slipped treacherously off the toe of his boot, flying with tremendous force and deadly precision into the face of old Beech, who had fussily come forward from his proper position.

Beech said a whole lot of really unkind things, when at last he was able to speak at all, but what made him particularly wild was the chorus of ecstatic laughter that went round the ropes. It was during this episode that young Marley scored our try.

If exhaustion had not been setting in again there would have been bloodshed after that. It was not lack of will on the players' part; it was simply that we could not catch the men we wished to murder. That's what saved us—or rather, them!

To see Mr. Merryline, like a mud-stained ostrich, striving to overtake the elusive Dibbles was a sight for the gods. To hear Mr. Grover's remarks, as he leant against his own goal-post, rubbing that portion of his shin which Mr. Snoffham had unintentionally hacked, was a study in extempore rhetoric. To watch Mr. Wix clasping old Beech round the neck till his victim grew purple in the face under his layer of mud, was an inspiration for modern sculptors. Constantly renewed applause greeted the activities of the referee, as he wrenched apart this or that couple of struggling opponents, who wrestled and fought for possession of the slippery ball.

Who that witnessed the incident will ever forget how Mr. Larkson's lovely pink jersey was ruthlessly torn from his back by the sacrilegious hands of our forwards? A little scream of horror and dismay went up as the blushing Mr. L. hastened to hide himself behind the forms of his angry colleagues. And when some cheap humorist shouted: "New jersey forward! Your change, Mr. L.!" the laugh that greeted his sally was one of embarrassment rather than amusement.

Somehow or other the end of the match arrived with the Drapery Department defeated by one goal to nil, and whether players or spectators were most exhausted it is difficult to say. Miss Filander declared that she had never laughed so much in her life before, and the referee admitted that he had never seen anything to touch us during his ten years' experience of Rugby football. Let us leave it at that.

Personally, I got a couple of days' holiday afterwards, while the dentist was fitting me with some teeth to replace those knocked out in the match, but I was just as disappointed as anyone else when I heard the great news a week later.

All our energy had been wasted, and we might just as well have done without the match as far as Miss Filander was concerned. She married Mr. Philipson Junior the following month, and now she drives up to the shop in a motor-car to call for her husband in the evening. Rotten for her old admirers, isn't it?

DO YOU WANT A BIG MONEY PRIZE?
If so, turn to page 377
and enter for our great
Picture Puzzles Competition.

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

Photo *John F. J. Wood*

A mine which was washed ashore on the East Coast, and found at Walberswick, near Southwold.

A MINE ASHORE.

In the present war mines have proved a terrible menace both to our Navy and to commerce. Occasionally it happens that they break from their moorings, as in the case of one which was washed ashore at Walberswick, near Southwold, on the East Coast.

This mine, which was made of iron and measured about 12 feet in circumference, aroused great interest in the district, and many people flocked to the beach to see it.

It is some comfort to reflect that it is no longer a danger to human life.

A TORPEDO YOU CAN SEE.

Torpedoes are not always discharged from submerged tubes as in the case of submarines, but are also fired from above-water tubes.

The torpedoes which are used in the British Navy are of three diameters—14, 18, and 21 inches, and their length varies from 16 to 18 feet.

Directly a torpedo hits its mark it explodes automatically; consequently, the only sure means of defence is to locate and shell the attacking torpedo-boat or submarine. Steel wire nets dropped all round the ship afford some protection, but are by no means infallible.

Photo *Daily Mirror.*

A torpedo just after its discharge from an above-water tube. In the case of submarines torpedoes are, of course, fired from submerged tubes.

Cincinnati, in the United States, is the home of a lady's polo team, the members of which are here seen ready for action.

LADIES ON THE POLO FIELD.

ALTHOUGH polo is too expensive a sport to attract the girl of average means, it is rapidly gaining ground in America among those who are wealthy enough to afford it.

Circular boats of similar shape are often seen on the Upper Tigris and Euphrates——

The only woman's polo team in the middle-west of the United States, is in Cincinnati, and is composed of some of the wealthiest and most popular girls of the city. There is also a woman's polo team in New York City.

AFLOAT IN THE EAST.

THE modes of travel adopted in the East are apt to be more picturesque than ours, though perhaps less convenient.

On the Lower Tigris and Euphrates curious boats of circular shape are often used by the natives, while an inflated sheepskin, upon which the traveller crouches, sometimes serves to convey people across the Upper Tigris.

This is a method of progress which would probably not appeal to Western folk, where time is of more moment than in the leisurely East.

——while the Upper Tigris is not infrequently crossed by the natives on an inflated sheepskin.

"JACK JOHNSON" AT THE FRONT.

THE English "Tommy" can be trusted to hit upon a happy name for most things, and he has dubbed the big German siege guns "Jack Johnsons," or as an alternative, "Black Marias."

These heavy guns give out a black, greasy smoke of great density, and the shells used with them weigh close on a thousand pounds.

A special wicker-work basket is employed to facilitate the handling of the shells, the lid being made of metal and fastened on with leather straps. Each basket has four handles, so that four men can share the load between them.

Photo *Underwood & Underwood.*

One of the big siege guns used by the Germans, which have been dubbed "Jack Johnsons," owing to their dense black smoke.

THE *KAISER* ON BOARD.

H.M.S. *King Edward VII.* has a curiosity on board in the shape of a painting of the German Flagship *Kaiser*. This was executed soon after the outbreak of war by one of the lieutenant-commanders, on part of the upper-works. This picture created great interest, and pleased the sailors so much that when next painting the ship they carefully avoided obliterating it.

It is certainly rather a novelty to have a reproduction of one of the enemy's men-of-war on a British battleship, and in so prominent a place.

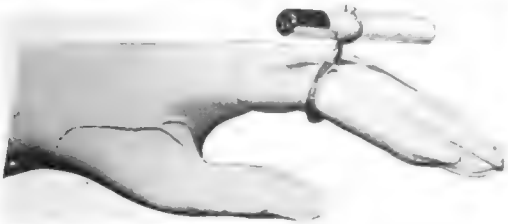


Photo *Sport & General.*

Lady smokers will appreciate this novel cigarette-holder, in the form of a dainty finger-ring.

FOR LADY SMOKERS.

Now that so many ladies are devotees of the weed, enterprising dealers have brought out many novelties for the use of fair smokers.

One of the most striking is a finger-ring fitted with a holder for the cigarette. This piece of jewellery costs anything from £5 to £100, many of the more expensive examples being set with precious stones.

This little novelty has the advantage of being both practical and ornamental, for it protects my lady's fingers from Lady Nicotine, and is also a very fascinating piece of jewellery, which any woman would be proud to own.

Photo *Dover Express.*

A picture of the German flagship *Kaiser* adorns the upper-works of H.M.S. *King Edward VII.* It was painted by one of the officers.

Her MARINE HIGHNESS

By

Violet M. Methley.

"My love has gone a-sailing
Across the deep blue sea."

I.

The chief officer of the *Orvieto* required a pocket-handkerchief—that is the beginning of his story.

They were steaming slowly down London River when the need became sufficiently urgent to drive him below. And as he rummaged amongst the contents of a drawer, a rustling sound from behind made him turn quickly.

The mate subsided upon the sofa under the porthole, with an exclamation which was providentially inarticulate, for a girl was crawling out from beneath the lower berth.

Two thick brown plaits hung forward over her shoulders and trailed on the floor; she wore a rose-pink woollen coat and a cap to match. Wriggling out with some difficulty, she sat back upon her heels, staring straight up into the face of the astonished mate. She was an amazingly pretty girl, of the flapper genus, and she was utterly unknown to him.

"I thought I'd better get under there in case——" she explained breathlessly. "But I'm so glad it's you!"

"What do you want?" the young man found sufficient breath to ask.

"I'm a stowaway."

"The dev——! Where did you come from?"

"London, of course."

"Who are you?"

"The Princess Hildegarde of Saxe-mundia."

At that amazing intelligence the mate's slowly gathering wits scattered once more into hopeless confusion; once more he stared dumbly.

"I can't explain anything more just at present." The girl's childish face was flushed with excitement. "It's all a secret But don't you know—haven't you heard—that princesses are often made to marry people whom they simply hate?"

"But you're not old enough to be married!"

The mate had risen; he spoke vaguely and perplexedly.

"I *am!* I'm nearly seventeen! Besides, princesses and people of that sort are always married extra early."

"But you're English, aren't you?"

"I've been at school in London ever since I was a tiny girl. But anyone would think——"

Suddenly her soft, red mouth quivered.

"Anyone would think that—that you don't believe me. And I thought I could t trust you!"

"Of course I do! Of course you can!" the mate protested. "It was only—you

took me by surprise, your—your Royal Highness."

Suddenly her lips twitched upwards and the laughter spread to her eyes.

"You said that beautifully!" she approved. "But don't bother about it all the time; just call me Princess. You will help me, won't you?"

"Why me?" the man asked ungrammatically.

"Because you look—nice."

Suddenly her clear eyes were raised to his face.

"That's why I asked the steward man to show me your cabin before the boat started off."

She paused, and added pensively:

"He seemed to think that I was engaged to you, or something. I saw you on deck when I was standing on shore, and you've got a sideways sort of mouth—something like Martin Harvey's, which I love. And your eyes are—square."

The mate's lean, brown face flushed a deep crimson as he listened to this frank analysis of his personal charms. Words were impossible; none could be found to meet the occasion.

"And so I just want you to hide me somewhere for a few days, till I couldn't possibly be sent back or landed in Europe. I wish I could tell you everything, but I can't just at present. You'll understand later."

"But how can I hide you?"

"Oh, there must be heaps and heaps of places in a big boat like this—the galley or the lazarette. I don't know what those are, but they always sound so nice and cosy. I did think of climbing down into the hold, but they were putting in a lot of dirty casks, and it didn't look a bit comfortable. Then I saw you, and I knew by instinct that you would help me—and you will."

Once more she met the mate's perturbed eyes with a look of utter confidence; then suddenly she questioned him with eager interest.

"What's your name?"

"Jenkins—Charles Jenkins."

"Oh!" Her lips drooped disappointedly. "I did hope it would be Ralph. That's my favourite name. Charles is so—so—it doesn't suit your sort of face a bit."

Again the mate flushed painfully.

"Look here, hadn't I better explain to the captain?" he said awkwardly. "He's an awfully good sort, and——"

There was a flurry of skirts. Before the flustered mate could realise exactly what was happening, he found two small hands upon his shoulders, and a lovely face, framed in soft hair, bewilderingly near to his own.

"Promise me that you won't tell anyone anything!" she implored. "It's—it means everything to me. Oh, promise, promise! Don't be cruel and horrid!"

With that flushed face and those appealing brown eyes so close, the mate found himself without choice in the matter.

"All right; I promise," he said reluctantly, and added in helpless despair:

"But what on earth are we to do, Princess? You can't stay in this cabin."

That was obvious. They stared at each other helplessly, and a frightened look crept into the girl's eyes. Her lips drooped and quivered; she seemed more adorably pretty than ever.

Fantastic plans for her concealment seethed in the mate's bewildered brain; he grasped wildly at the least imbecile.

"I've thought of something," he said. "But you'd better hide again while I'm away trying to arrange it."

Jenkins went straight up on deck, sought out the captain, and plunged desperately into action.

"I wanted to speak to you about that empty cabin near mine, sir," he began without preface.

"What about it?" The captain's eyes twinkled as they rested upon the younger man's flushed face. "Have you discovered a sea-serpent or something in it, Mr. Jenkins? You look rather—well—overheated."

The mate laughed with unconvincing heartiness.

"Oh, dear no, I haven't been into it, sir," he protested. "It's only—— The fact is, may I keep a canary in it?"

"A canary?"

"Yes; a rather special canary. I've taken charge of it."

"Why won't your own cabin do?"

The mate blushed vividly.

"I'm afraid of people going in and out, sir," he said. "We've got such a confounded lot of cats on board. They'd have the bird as sure as fate, and it's such a pretty little thing."

The mate felt quite self-consciously virtuous over the truth of that last sentence.

"Oh, I see!"

"So I thought if you'd let me lock up that cabin, sir, I could keep it in there quite safely."

"Oh, all right, Jenkins; I've no objection." And the mate departed.

The half-dozen yards of transit between the two cabins were accomplished safely. When it was over, the mate wiped a brow moist with fear and anxiety, whilst the Princess, shaking with half-hysterical mirth, sank down upon the sofa.

"I'm frightfully hungry!" she announced abruptly. "I've had nothing since breakfast except two petit-beurre biscuits and some chocolates."

Here was a new and, as yet, unfaced consideration. The mate rubbed the back of his head, seeking guidance, which the Princess supplied.

"You must ask for something to eat, as though it was for yourself," she decreed. "That's quite easy. You can tell them to bring tea to your cabin, and then pass it on to me."

"Yes, of course I *could*."

The mate's tone was a shade doubtful, even reluctant. The Princess caught the inflection.

"Oh, I am a beast!" she cried. "Then you'd have none yourself. I know!" Her face brightened. "We'll share it; but do see that it's a *very* big tea!"

The manœuvre was accomplished more easily than the mate had dared to hope. Dawson, the steward, brought the tea-tray; the mate himself conveyed it to the locked cabin, and they partook of tea together.

The Princess would permit no ceremony; they were like the veriest boy and girl. She sat upon the edge of the bunk, and the mate upon the sofa. Since there was only one cup, the mate drank from the saucer, and both used the same teaspoon perforce, whilst the Princess divided the cake into equal portions with her slim little fingers.

It was a glorious and memorable meal, in spite of ever-present anxieties and the fact that the supply of bread-and-butter was unequal to the demand.

When they had finished, the Princess frankly confessed to an abiding hunger, and, once more in his own cabin, the mate surveyed the empty tray and the commissariat problem with perplexed dismay.

II.

The strategic skill and resource of Charles Jenkins during the next few days were worthy of a Cæsar. He obtained biscuits from the steward on a plea of insomnia and the necessity of light refreshment in the night. He strolled carelessly into the saloon before meals, and, when left alone for a moment, crammed his pockets with rolls, apples, and anything of a portable nature. Once he hid a whole ox-tongue under his coat, and basely ascribed the theft to the cat.

He partook invariably of cold meat, and carried away most of it in a clean pocket-handkerchief. And yet, all was not enough. The naturally excellent appetite of the Princess was reinforced by sea-air; she could not get sufficient to eat, and she did not hesitate to blame the mate.

For his part, he could sympathise only too well; not once since her advent had he been able to obtain a really square meal.

One day he discovered her literally crying with hunger, and, in desperation, nearly brought matters to a climax. He departed precipitately for the saloon, where Dawson and his compeers were laying luncheon.

The mate lounged nonchalantly in a window until he was alone; then he seized the opportunity and a large meat-pie. Poising a glass of jelly on the top, he set off for his cabin—and ran straight into the arms of his superior officer.

The captain stared at the scattered fragments of jelly and glass which had fallen from the mate's nerveless grasp.

"What the blazes are you doing, Jenkins?" he asked severely. "You're not engaged to act as steward on this boat."

"No. I—I——"

For the moment the mate was inarticulate.

"Or were you taking this food to feed your canary?"

"No, sir."

The mate summoned all his wits to lure the captain from this dangerous ground.

"The fact is, I—I've got a sort of indigestion, the doctor calls it. It makes me perpetually hungry."

"Yes, I've noticed your appetite lately," the skipper remarked pensively.

"It's a horrible feeling." The mate grew bolder with success. "A sort of sinking, you know—emptiness. I'm really ashamed to eat all I want to at meals, so I was taking some to my cabin."

"So I see. Well, I'm sorry you're not well, Jenkins. But you needn't mind how much you eat at table in future; I shall quite understand."

He passed on, leaving the mate to digest a rather equivocal triumph.

Yet in spite of all these worries and anxieties, it would be untrue to say that Jenkins was unhappy. Those stolen feasts in the locked cabin, those conversations whispered for fear of discovery, had all become extraordinarily sweet to him.

The sweetness hid danger, for soon, very soon now, this little hidden Princess of his would reveal herself, and then—well—other people would take the business in hand, and set matters right or wrong, as the case might be. The mate of the *Orvieto* would resume his normal lowly place in the scheme of things, and everything would come to an end.

Everything—aye, and it was only in the loneliness of night, on the bridge or in his cabin, that Charles Jenkins was forced to face the real meaning, to him, of that word "everything."

Meanwhile, the *Orvieto* had seen her leisurely last of England; she was steaming southwards in weather that was extraordinarily mild and windless.

Then, one night, Fate took matters into her own relentless hands, laughing at all the mate's little hopes and fears and subterfuges.

Jenkins left the bridge at midnight, a strange, airless midnight, with a heavy fog-bank away to the south. For an hour or more he tossed feverishly from one side of his bunk to the other, with futile plans and speculations buzzing in his aching head, then fell, at last, into a wretched, unrefreshing sleep.

He woke some hours later, with the sound of a great crash in his ears, to find himself sprawling on the cabin floor. For an instant he lay there, stunned, then struggled to his feet, with a half-stupid sensation that something was amiss. The floor was aslant, or was it imagination?

He switched on the light, and the cabin had an aspect oddly nightmarish. Snatching his pilot coat from a peg, and dragging it on as he ran, Jenkins made for the deck, along alley-ways which slanted acutely.

The mate reached the deck to find that a dense fog walled them in on every side. From out of that horror of clammy darkness to starboard came an incessant moaning shriek, like that of an animal in pain. But the

He set off for his cabin and ran straight into the arms of his superior officer. The captain stared at the scattered fragments of jelly and glass which had fallen from the mate's nerveless grasp.

Orvieto herself lay silently in the water, listing so that her bulwarks were awash, trembling through all her fabric like a stricken creature.

On the clammy decks people slid to and fro, some shouting and directing, others answering the frantic incoherent questions put to them by clusters of frightened passengers. Just as Jenkins reached the deck, the electric lights went out suddenly, and the whole scene of horror and strenuous exertion was only fitfully visible by the blaze of flares.

He staggered back through the dense darkness, with the girl supported in his arms. . . . . How they managed to ascend the companion the mate never knew.

The mate caught a glimpse of the captain, throwing out the gripes of one of the quarter-boats, and he made towards him, sliding and stumbling.

"Oh, you're there—that's right!" The elder man glanced up, then went on with his work. "We've been run down, Jenkins—it's only a matter of minutes. The other boat's standing by there. She's not badly hurt herself. We must get everybody off at once; there's not a minute to lose. One boatload's off already, with all the women and children. Come on: lend a hand!"

And then the mate remembered.

"I must go below again, sir, to fetch something," he said.

"You can't!" The captain caught his arm. "There's no time, I tell you—and in the dark—it's impossible, man! There's your duty on deck. Besides, I believe everybody's up——"

"Let me go, for God's sake, sir! It's the locked cabin."

"Heaven's, man, you must be mad! D'you mean the canary?"

"No—a girl!"

The words broke from the mate's white lips as he tried to wrench himself free.

"Good Heavens!" Amazement, anger, contempt were in the captain's eyes as he released the younger man, with such violence that he staggered backwards. "A girl! Then, go—but it's death for both. God help you!"

Blindly, Jenkins stumbled down the companion into that horror of darkness below. There were matches in his pocket, and now

and then he was forced to strike one to guide himself as he lurched and staggered along the sloping decks, blundering against a hundred obstacles.

He reached his own cabin, and found the key which he needed. As he did so, the ship gave a violent lurch, flinging him forward. Blood was running into his eyes from a cut on his head, almost blinding him; no matter, in that utter darkness. But the blow had made him turn sick and dizzy.

He reached the locked cabin; from within came the sound of faint, exhausted sobbing. A moment of horrible suspense for fear that the door would be jammed; then, with a mighty effort, he wrenched it open, and felt the girl's body pressed against his. He caught her in his arms and comforted her, in what words he scarcely knew.

"It's all right, dear, it's all right," he repeated, as one might console a frightened child. "I'm here, and the boats are waiting. We've only got to get back on deck."

Only! Even as he spoke, Jenkins knew that the *Orviedo* was settling. The slope of the deck was so acute now that he could scarcely stand, as he staggered back through the dense darkness, with the girl supported in his arms. She clung to him very quietly, and without speaking, but now and then a sob shook her slim body.

How they managed to ascend the companion the mate never knew; indeed, his head was so dazed and aching that he seemed throughout to act more from instinct than from reason. Dimly he realised that someone was hailing him from above, but it seemed impossible to answer.

"Jenkins—are you there, man? There's still a chance, if you come at once!"

They were at the top of the companion now; below them the deck sloped away as steeply as the side of a house. The sound of continuous shouting came from somewhere close at hand, where flares blazed, flickering over the dark, oily water, showing the outlines of boats moving to and fro. Someone staggered towards them, and the captain's voice spoke, sharp with sudden relief.

"Thank Heaven you've managed it, Jenkins! Here, let me take her——"

The mate relinquished his hold of the slim body. He felt his legs slipping from under him, knew himself to be falling, falling over the edge of the world. And out of the growing darkness he heard the captain's voice again:

"Good God, it's Alsie!"

III.

"You broke two ribs and an arm, and it's a wonder it wasn't every bone in your body. Also, you've had slight concussion of the brain, and been half-drowned. But everybody was saved—my little girl and all. Look here, Jenkins, you're not fit to talk any more yet; Alsie shall explain things to you in a few days' time."

"Father's quite right. It was frightfully deceitful, although I didn't tell many downright lies. You would never have hidden me—now, would you?—if I had told the truth, and I did so want to have a voyage with father. I don't think *he's* angry with me about that part of it. But I'm so tremendously sorry. It was all my fault that you were hurt like this, and father nearly drowned, because he wouldn't leave the ship without us. I've promised him that I will never do anything so silly and babyish again. . . ."

"From the very first moment that I saw you crawling out from under my berth, dear. Mind waiting? No! I'd wait a thousand years for you—my Princess!"

TO LUCY, AT PARTING.

Good-bye, I cannot bear to say
The words that tell me we must part;
How shall I tear myself away,
And grieve your tender, trusting heart?

But as I meet your sweet brown eyes
I know I cannot give you up—
Till now I didn't realise
How much I loved you, little pup!

Leslie Mary Oyler.

WHEN NOBBY WAS A WEATHER PROPHET.

By Edgar Wallace

No "Tommy" ever had such an amazing facility for getting out of tight corners as Mr. Edgar Wallace's soldier hero. The following story deals with Nobby's exploits as a weather prophet, when, despite adverse circumstances, he contrived to come out on top.

"If you were to ask me," said Smithy, "who's got the quickest brain in the Anchester Regiment, I'd up an' say 'Nobby Clark.' Not because he's a pal of mine, not because him an' me has soldiered together in all parts of the world from Paris to Paardeburg, but because I've sort of stood outside meself an' watched him.

"Lots of people who don't know Nobby think he's unscrupulous. Spud Murphy thinks so, but then he don't know Nobby properly. Tiny White thinks so, but that is only because Tiny an' him fell out over weather prophettin'. The truth about Nobby is that he's a born prophet.

"Tiny always had a hobby of foretellin' the weather. It's easier than tippin' horses, because, so to speak, the field is half way home before you give your Gran' Twelve o'Clock Final for the Big Race.

"He used to sit at the table with a sheet of paper, a pen and ink, an' an Old Moore's Almanac, an' give predictions that was highly impressive.

"'There's a depression approachin' these isles,' he sez one day, 'an' a hanti-cyclone workin' up from the Azoreys—takin' one thing with another, there ought to be rain in the north-west of Scotland to-morrer.

"'What about the south-east of Ireland?' sez Nobby.

"'Fog,' sez Tiny prompt. 'Fog an' local thunderstorms.'

"Tiny's predictions never dealt with anywhere nearer than the north of Scotland, so, naturally, we hardly ever knew for certain if they had come off. He used to tell us they had, but there was nothin' about it in the papers.

"Naturally, we didn't expect to read startlin' headlines like

'Rain at Strathbrassie,
'Great excitement in Scotland,'

every time Tiny struck a winner.

"Occasiona'ly he'd go farther out, an once he predicted a terrible storm in the Atlantic.

"'I'm glad I'm not on the sea to-night' he sez: 'what with that low pressure comin' up from the Azoreys an' the high pressure revolvin' westward from Ireland, they won't half have a time crossin' the Atlantic.

"We spent two days an' a lot of money buyin' the evenin' an' mornin' papers to see if anything had happened to the mail-boats. The only bit of news we had was that the *Carmania* had sighted a dead whale.

"'Killed by the storm,' sez Tiny very solemn, 'higher up towards Greenland an' Iceland an' the North Pole,' he sez.

"'Why don't you do a bit o' weather predictin' nearer home?' sez Nobby. 'What's the use of wastin' your talents on the North Pole? Nobody cares if it snows there.'

"But Tiny wouldn't give any predictions nearer home—not unless he were obliged. They tried to get him to deliver a word or two about the weather on the day we played the West Kents in the third round of the Army Cup, but he wouldn't give it till within an hour of the match bein' played, an' then he was wrong.

"I don't think Nobby took much interest in weather predictin' because, as far as me an' Nobby could see, there was no money in it.

"Tiny went away to the reserve an' was called up for the war. He used to be a very decent chap before what I might term the contaminatin influence of civilian life got at him. He came back to the Army wearin' spats—an' nothin' gives away a feller worse than spats.

"'Oh, yes,' he sez, very languid, 'I'm dreadfully keen on meteor-ology.'

"'What's her name?' sez Nobby.

"'Meteor-ology,' sez Tiny, 'the science,' he sez, 'of studyin' the weather. An' it's goin' to pay me,' he sez.

"Nobby was interested at once.

"It appears that before the Expeditionary Army went out, the Government started a weather department to accompany the Army in the field. It sounds a rum idea, but there is a lot of sense in it.

"Nobby explained it to me afterwards.

"Suppose the general is makin' arrangements for a big battle. He sends for the weather expert.

"'What sort of weather are we goin' to have?' sez the general.

"'Strong westerly breezes, mong general,' sez the weather sergeant.

"'Good!' sez the general. 'Then we'll attack the enemy from the east—they won't smell us comin'.'

"Tiny said that a friend of his in the weather department at Victoria Street had told him all about it. The New Weather Corps was to tell the aeroplanes how long they could stay up.

"'I've put in me name,' sez Tiny, 'an' I daresay I shall be transferred in a day or two. The pay is six shillins a day——'

"'Say no more, Tiny,' sez Nobby, speakin' with great emotion; 'me an' you will transfer together.'

"He used to sit at the table with a sheet of paper, a pen and ink, an' an Old Moore's Almanac, an' give predictions that was highly impressive."

"It wasn't anything unusual to see the chaps of D Company diggin' little trenches round their tents to carry off the rain what Tiny said was comin', whilst B Company chaps was hangin' out their washin' to dry because Nobby had predicted 'variable breezes—warmer.'"

"'What do you know about the weather?' sez Tiny, very amazed.

"'I've been out in all kinds of it,' sez Nobby.

"The next mornin' Nobby paraded before the adjutant.

"'You want to join the Weather Brigade?' sez the adjutant, puzzled. 'An' what the devil is the Weather Brigade?'

"So Nobby up an' told him.

"'I've never heard of it,' sez the adjutant; 'somebody has been pullin' your leg—besides, you know nothin' about the weather.'

"'Sir,' sez Nobby, 'there ain't anythin' about the weather that I don't know.'

"'What sort of an evenin' are we goin' to have?' sez the adjutant.

"'Variable breezes,' sez Nobby, 'with slight rain in places; fine later; cooler.'

"An' all that Nobby predicted was true," said Smithy in a hushed voice, "just as he said it, it came off.

"The next day the adjutant sees Nobby goin' across the square and calls him.

"'Your weather prediction was good,' he sez. 'What newspaper did you read it in?'

"'Paper, sir?' sez Nobby surprised. 'I didn't know they had weather predictions in newspapers.'

"'What is the weather going to be like to-day?' sez the adjutant.

"'Cloudy, with local showers,' sez Nobby, 'and cooler.'

"'*Daily Telegraph*,' sez the adjutant.

"Nobby saluted.

"'Beg pardon, sir,' he sez, 'the *Telegraph* sez "warmer."'

"'Go away, Private Clark,' sez the adjutant, 'before I forget meself.'

"Now the rum thing was that, instead of

bein' 'warmer,' as the paper said, it *was* cooler, and that's where Nobby Clark's reputation as a weather expert started to grow.

"An' it increased after we got to France, because, havin' no newspapers to go on, an' being obliged, so to speak, to depend on his own wonderful powers, the troops could see there was no hanky-panky, an' that Nobby was the genuine weather expert of the 1st Anchesters.

"Tiny White was nothin' to Nobby. Tiny was wild as anythin', but he had to take a second place.

"'What's the weather goin' to be like?' he sneers one mornin'—it was the day we en-motor 'bussed for X——

"'Fine with thunderstorms,' sez Nobby, 'an' warmer in the evenin'.'

"'You're wrong,' sez Tiny. 'We shall have rain, and it will be cooler.'

"'Noos verongs,' sez Nobby.

"'What's that mean?' sez Tiny.

"'It's a French weather expression,' sez Nobby.

"Tiny was in D Company, an' me an' Nobby was in old historic B, an', as everybody knows, B Company and D Company of the Anchesters are on pretty bad terms.

"It was only natural that D should stand up for Tiny and B for Nobby, an' when we reached the advanced base it wasn't anythin' unusual to see the chaps of D Company diggin' little trenches round their tents to carry off the rain what Tiny said was comin', whilst B Company chaps was hangin' out their washin' to dry because Nobby had predicted 'variable breezes—warmer.'

"One mornin', when there wasn't a cloud in the sky, Tiny got out his prediction: 'Fine and pleasant for the next twenty-four hours,' and it rather looked as if Nobby would have to come into line, or else get himself severely tangled up.

"'Smithy,' he sez, 'I've got to do somethin'—the eyes of the battalion are on me.'

"An' that was a fact. Even the officers was beginnin' to believe in Nobby, and Major Anstruther of D used to bet the adjutant real money that his man beat Nobby Clark.

"Nobby sat down very serious, an' produced what I might term the most complete weather tip that's ever been issued. He wrote it down on a bit of paper, and Lance-Corporal Tingle of the Orderly Room made copies of it:

"'There's a heavy depression approachin' from the north, an' a big storm is expected with thunder and lightning. This is one of the biggest storms ever known. It will move in a southerly direction, and will carry everything before it. Warmer an' sultry.'

"Smithy paused and went on solemnly:

"Don't let anybody tell me that Nobby ain't a prophet. That same day our division was rushed to Mons, and by sunset that there depression from the north struck us—five army corps of it. It was the kind of storm I never want to see again, for it lasted till we was south of the Marne, an' the thunder hasn't stopped yet."

OUR STREET.

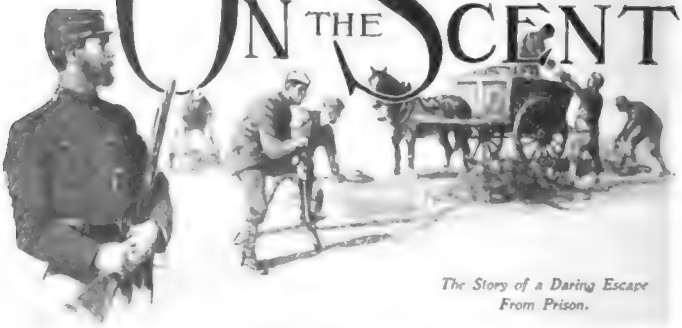
Up and down our street to-day
'Tis dull as dull can be;
Half the chaps have marched away
Or sailed across the sea;
There's Bob and Ben from number ten, and
Bill from number four,
And Tom, and Ted, and Frank, and Fred,
who used to lodge next door.

Jim has gone from number eight,
And Alf from number three,
And 'Erb who with my sister, Kate,
Was keeping company.
At number nine a pal o' mine to 'list declares
he's game;
And Albert 'Icks, at number six, he means
to do the same.

And so, when later on, you read
Of something extry fine,
The 'ero of that dashing deed
May live at number nine,
Be Bob or Ben from number ten, or Alf
from number three,
Or Albert 'Icks from number six—which
that same party's me.

Ada Leonora Harris.

On the Scent



The Story of a Daring Escape From Prison.

By T. C. Bridges.

"Jove! but tobacco tastes good after a day like I've had," remarked Warder Inglis as he blew a cloud of smoke from between his lips.

"Had a bad day, George?" asked Assistant Warder Grattan.

"Rotten!" replied Inglis briefly.

"I say, Bob," he went on presently, "what d've think of that chap Fearon?"

"I don't think of him at all if I can help it."

"Ah, you don't have to! You're lucky. You've got nothing to do with him. He's worse than useless. He's——"

Inglis checked himself.

"Well?" asked Grattan, looking curiously at the other.

"I don't like to say things against the chap, even to you, Bob, especially as I've no proof."

"You'll get that fast enough, if you keep your eyes open. There's others besides you suspect Fearon of trafficking."

Inglis sat up suddenly.

"Is that a fact?" he asked.

"Why, of course it is, you old innocent. There were two or three chaps in his last party who always had plenty of tobacco. He'd do anything for money. Have you found out anything definite?"

Inglis got up, went to the door, opened it, and looked out into the passage. Then he came in again and closed the door carefully.

"Yes I have," he said. "You know that chap Otley in my party?"

"The fellow they call 'Swell Sam'?"

"That's the one. There's something between him and Fearon."

"I shouldn't wonder a bit. Otley's one of the swell mob. He's got pals with money. Chances are that Fearon's making ten bob a week by bringing him in tobacco or letters."

"I've been wanting to talk to someone," confessed Inglis. "Fact is, I'm a bit bothered. I've got next to nothing to go on, and yet I've a nasty feeling that something's wrong. Have you been to The Feathers lately?"

"The Feathers?" repeated Grattan. "Yes, I was in there for a glass of beer only last night. And that reminds me. Fearon was there too."

"He's been there every day lately. Tell me, was there a tall, well-dressed chap in the bar—a man of about thirty-five, clean-shaven, rather horsey looking, with fair hair and very pale blue eyes?"

"There was. Falcon, I heard someone call him. He's staying there for the hunting."

"So I've heard. But I don't believe it. My notion is that he's a pal of Swell Sam."

"What makes you think that?" exclaimed Grattan.

"I haven't much to go on, but twice I've seen Fearon talking to him in the bar-and the night before last, as I was coming from the station by the short cut, I spotted the two of them, thick as thieves, in that alley back of the post office. I pulled up and watched them. I couldn't hear much, for they were talking in whispers. But I know money passed between them for I heard the chink of it, and then Falcon said:

"'Friday's the day and Misdon's the place. Tell him to remember that. Don't make any mistake, for we'll never get a second chance.'

"'I shan't make any mistake. You can bet your life on that,' replied Fearon. And then he slipped off one way and Falcon the other.

"What do you think of it?" he continued as Grattan did not speak.

"Hanged if I know what to think. They didn't mention Otley?"

"No; but as I told you just now, there's some sort of understanding between him and Fearon. I've been watching them these three days, ever since Fearon came on to my party."

"What do you suspect? Do you think Otley's planning a bunk?"

"Something like it."

"And for Friday? By Jove, to-morrow's Friday!"

"I know that," said Inglis shortly.

"It beats me." Grattan shook his head. "How can a lag possibly plan to bunk on any particular day? He's bound to wait for a fog or a storm. He wouldn't stand a dog's chance in the bright weather we've been having lately."

"Still, chaps have tried it on in fine weather. Look at Hankey last spring. He went over the wall into the plantation on the way down from the quarry."

"And got three buckshot in his left leg as a remembrance," grinned Grattan. "Besides, you don't bring your men past the plantation. I tell you, George, I don't see how anything can happen as long as you keep your eye on the chap. Now, as I've got night duty, I must be going. So long."

He went off, but Inglis sat for a long time smoking and trying to piece together the puzzle.

Rather to his relief, next morning turned out brilliantly fine, and after chapel he mustered his party at their appointed place in the prison yard. Before going out to work every prisoner is "rubbed down"—that is searched to see if he has food or any other contraband about him. On this occasion Inglis took pains to search Otley personally. But, though he went over him very carefully, he found nothing suspicious about him. The man made no remark, but there was a shadow of a grin on his face which seemed to show that he thoroughly appreciated the situation.

Fifteen was a farm party, and their job for the day was pulling a field of roots. It was a big, square, ten-acre field, bordering on the main road which ran between Moorlands and Ashampton. It was surrounded, like all the other prison fields, by dry-stone walls about five feet high, and wide enough at the top for a man to walk comfortably.

When he had got his men to work, Inglis took up a position from which he could watch them all and Fearon especially. Two civil guards were posted, one out in the road, the other on the wall at the far side of the field, while the field itself lay in full view of the signalling station above the quarry. Inglis himself had his carbine loaded and ready. For the life of him he could not see how anything untoward could happen, and as time went on and all seemed quiet, his suspicions insensibly relaxed.

He noticed a good many people, some mounted, some afoot, passing down the road, and it occurred to him that there was a meet of foxhounds at Crockenford Bridge, about a mile to the east of the prison farm. He watched, and presently saw Mr. Richard Falcon very correctly got up and very well mounted on a big bay pass the road gate.

Well, he was out o' the way for a time, and Inglis breathed a sigh of relief.

About half-past ten he heard a horn in the distance. They were drawing Crockenford Gorse, and hounds would probably get away down the valley. Presently, however, the deep note of a pack in full cry came to his ears. The sound grew steadily louder, and the men began to prick up their ears and look about. Any little diversion, however small, is a treat to a prisoner at penal servitude, and a sight of the hunt would give them something to think of for a month to come.

Closer and closer came the musical din. Inglis could see nothing yet, but he judged hounds were running across the paddock opposite, parallel with the prison wall. There was nothing remarkable in this. He had known them come that way before, and when they did they generally managed to head the fox out over Morton Mire. If the fox got into the prison ground he saved his brush, for the farm was, of course, forbidden ground to the hunt. In any case they could not

follow, for the gates, heavy iron affairs, were always kept locked, and the outer walls were much too big to jump.

Inglis kept a sharp look out, but saw nothing of the fox. Imagine, then, his amazement when in a dappled wave the pack came flashing over the road wall exactly opposite, and swept like a hurricane across the field.

Fox or not, scent was evidently red-hot, for they ran with their heads up, travelling so close together that you might have covered the lot with a moderate sized carpet.

Before he had recovered from his surprise half-a-dozen of the foremost riders were at the gate. He saw one man lean down and hook his crop into the latch. The gate swung open.

There were shouts from behind: "No, not that way!" But the man who had opened the gate was too excited to hear, and before the civil guard could reach him to turn him back he was through, and followed by nearly a dozen others galloping hard after the hounds.

It all happened so quickly that, before Inglis had time to think, the first riders were level with his party. Naturally every single man had stopped work, and was standing staring at the unaccustomed sight.

Suddenly a horse pecked. It was not much more than a stumble, but the rider shot out of his saddle and measured his length on the soft, black, peaty ground. At the same moment a convict sprang forward out of the ranks, seized the horse by the bridle, flung himself into the saddle, and, ramming in his heels, was off across the field as hard as he could pelt.

Inglis saw that he was Otley.

Prison orders are that when a man runs he is to be challenged, and the first shot fired over his head. With reckless disregard for the rules, Inglis flung up his carbine and blazed straight at Otley.

"Shoot, Fearon!" he roared, and even in that moment of intense excitement, he was amazed to see that Fearon obeyed.

But Otley, lying flat on his horse's withers, did not show a sign that either of the two charges of buckshot had reached either him or his mount. He was well behind the rest of the riders, and, pulling his horse round to the right, rode for the wall at the top of the field.

This wall was lower than that by the road. He put his horse straight at it. The clever beast bucked on to the top, changed its feet, jumped down on the far side, and was gone.

For the moment, at any rate, pursuit was out of the question. Bitterly vexed, Inglis swung round on his own men who were standing gaping with amazement, and the first thing he saw was Fearon in the act of picking up Mr. Richard Falcon.

By this time he had, of course, realised that the whole business was a plant, and that Falcon had tumbled off on purpose to give Otley his chance. He took a quick step forward, fully intending to tax the man with what he had done.

But just in time he realised the foolishness of such a proceeding and pulled up short.

"Is the gentleman hurt, Mr. Fearon?" he asked sharply.

"No, Mr. Inglis. Only shaken," replied Fearon. "He says he's all right."

"Tell him the doctor shall be sent to him, if he wishes it. Now help me get the men together. Fall in, all of you. Quick march!"

After an escape, all working parties are taken straight into the prison so that as large a force as possible of warders may be ready to take part in the pursuit. Inglis managed things so smartly that he had his party into the gate before any of the others.

Already the big prison bell was clanging furiously, spreading news of the escape all over the village and the surrounding moor. Inglis made all haste to get his men locked into their cells, then bolted off to the Governor's office.

"So it's one of your men who's gone, Mr. Inglis?" said Colonel Peyton, glowering at the warder from under his bushy grey eyebrows. If there was one thing the old martinet hated it was an escape.

"Yes, sir," answered Inglis, facing the Governor boldly. "But if you'll let me have a horse, I think I can bring him back before night."

"What do you mean? How can you bring him back? D'ye know where he's gone?"

"I believe I do, sir. But it's a long story, and there's no time to waste."

Peyton gave the other one quick, penetrating glance.

"Very well," he said shortly. "You shall have my own horse. But if you don't find your man, look out for squalls. Now go."

Colonel Peyton was known to be a man of his word, and out of the seventy or more warders who were already distributing themselves across the country and cursing their hard fate as they did so, probably not one felt more acutely unhappy than George Inglis. Of course, it wasn't his fault in any

With reckless disregard for the rules, Ingate [illegible] his carbine and blazed straight at Otley.

sense of the word that Otley had escaped, but the man had been in his party, and the prison service resembles the Army and the Navy in that excuses are not looked upon with a favouring eye. No, if Otley were not caught, he, Inglis, would suffer. Not perhaps for the moment, but certainly in the future. He would be passed over for promotion, or shifted to another prison.

And it looked all odds against Otley being caught, for his escape was evidently no mere sudden crazy dash for freedom, but the result of a carefully worked-out plan. A well-mounted man, with friends outside to help him, is in a very different position from the fugitive afoot, with no food, money, or clothes, and every man's hand against him.

One thing, however, Inglis was pretty sure of, which was that if he didn't catch Otley, no one else would. For he was the only man in the prison, except Fearon, who had the faintest notion of the direction in which the ex-swell mobsman had gone.

"Friday's the day and Misdon's the place," Falcon had said to Fearon, and it was Misdon that Inglis was making for as hard as the legs of Colonel Peyton's stout cob could carry him.

Luckily for himself, Inglis knew the moor—knew it from Ashampton to Okestock and back. He was, therefore, aware that Misdon Beacon was a lonely ridge rising amid a multitude of bog-strewn valleys in the centre of the North Quarter. It was about eight miles from the prison, but eight such miles as were each worth two ordinary miles, and although Otley had a good twenty minutes start, yet Inglis, counting on his superior knowledge of the moor, hoped to catch him before he got there.

The weather had changed with the suddenness so often seen on the moor. A cold wind had sprung up, the sky was covered with dull clouds, and the higher tors were topped with crests of streaming mist. The mist thickened so fast that Inglis knew that before night the whole of the high moor would be wrapped in fog, and then the last chance of catching the fugitive would be gone. He drove his willing beast as fast as he dared, and kept a sharp look-out in every direction until at last he caught sight of the beacon.

Misdon Beacon is shaped like a kneeling camel, the hump being represented by a rounded tor of broken, weather-worn granite in the centre of its back. Inglis pulled his sweating horse to a walk and considered.

As Misdon had been given by Falcon as the rendezvous, it was only natural to suppose that someone had been deputed to meet Otley there, or, if not, at any rate that there would be a change of clothing, food, and money hidden in some prearranged spot for Otley's benefit. Once Otley got hold of these his chances of escape were enormously increased. The question for Inglis was the exact location of the meeting-place or cache, and the more he thought the more evident it seemed that this would be the tor itself.

Inglis knew, of course, that his uniform would enable anyone to spot him for a warder as far as they could see him. If there was a confederate posted behind the tor he must be careful not to alarm him. He therefore cut across a narrow neck at the south end of the tor and came up the far side.

A thin drizzle had now begun to fall and the mist was coming down swiftly. It was not fog yet, for every now and then the clouds would lift and clear, but it was only a question of an hour or two before they settled down in earnest.

Luck was with him. As he emerged on the eastern edge of the tor a veil of misty white vapour blew across, and under its cover he cantered briskly up the bare, open side of the great ridge.

Judging by the decreasing slope that he was near the top, he checked his horse to a walk and moved forward cautiously.

A dark mass loomed through the smother. It was the tor itself. He pulled up.

"Sam, is that you?"

The voice came from somewhere at the base of the pile of rocks. Straining his eyes through the gloom Inglis made out a man standing at the head of two horses. Their bridles were over his arm. So Misdon was the meeting-place, and this was an accomplice waiting for Otley with a fresh mount. What was more, Otley had not yet arrived.

Excitement sent the blood drumming in Inglis' veins. He realised that whatever he did must be done quickly, and a plan flashed instantly into his mind.

"Yes, it's me," he answered gruffly. And then, before the man could answer, he had grasped his baton and driving in his heels sent his beast forward at a gallop.

"What are you doing, Sam? Be careful!" cried the other, trying to draw back out of the way.

It was the last remark that he made for some little time, for Inglis' baton caught him neatly across the skull, and without a sound he fell flat upon the wet turf.

The horses, frightened, pulled back sharply, but Inglis was out of his saddle like a flash, and grasped their bridles before they could get away.

"That's better," he remarked, as he led them back into the shelter of the rock, where they stood quietly enough.

The man who had been in charge of them lay where he had fallen. He was a tough-looking customer, and Inglis had no regrets whatever for having put him out by a trick. He knelt down beside him and found that he was breathing quite satisfactorily; then, as there was no time to waste, he set to work to carry out the rest of his plan.

He pulled out his baton and made a sudden rush at Otley. . . . The convict swung his horse round, and, kicking the animal fiercely in the ribs, was off down the hill.

This necessitated changing clothes with his late opponent, and anyone who has ever tried to undress an insensible man knows what an awkward job it is.

He had barely got the fellow's coat off, when the thud of a horse's hoofs on turf came faintly to his ears. Otley, without a doubt, and Inglis blessed his kind fates that the fog cloud still hung thick over the hill. With all speed he flung off his own tunic and pulled on the coat; then picking up the other man's cap, he stuck that on his own head. There was no time to do more in the way of disguising himself.

Leaving the insensible man where he lay, he jumped on the cob's back. The other two horses he left standing. If all went well, he could send for them later.

"Burke, Burke, are you there?"

It was Otley's voice raised as near a shout as he dared. Inglis rode off deliberately in the direction of the sound.

"Burke!" cried Otley again sharply.

Inglis gave a low whistle.

"That you, Burke?" came the answer in a tone of deepest relief, and Otley loomed up through the fast-thickening mist. He was a very tall man, and on his big horse he looked simply gigantic.

"'Sh!" hissed back Inglis. "There are warders about."

"The devil! Then we must get on as quickly as we can. Where's the spare horse?"

"Tied behind the tor," answered Inglis, and, fearing to come any nearer lest the other should recognise him, he pulled out his baton and made a sudden rush at Otley.

He was just too late. With a startled oath, the convict swung his horse round, and,

kicking the animal fiercely in the ribs, was off down the hill.

Inglis followed. He was bitterly disappointed at the failure of his ruse. It was cruel to have missed success by so little. Now the chances looked to be all in Otley's favour, for the big hunter which he bestrode was much faster than the Colonel's sturdy cob. Once out of sight in this fog, it was all odds against ever seeing him or his rider again.

The moor is no place for galloping in any sort of weather. In this smother it seemed like suicide. But there was no time to think of that. Every thought and every energy which Inglis possessed were centred on the one idea of keeping Otley in sight.

Otley's horse was not as fresh as it had been, and Otley himself, not having been in a saddle for a matter of two years, was evidently tired too. It was these two facts which enabled Inglis to hang on.

After a nightmare dash down the steep side of the ridge, they reached the valley, and Otley turned his horse to the right in a northerly direction. Inglis wondered if he did it on purpose, if he knew that he was heading straight for the heart of that lofty wilderness known as the High Moor.

The fog had lifted a trifle. This was lucky for Inglis, for down here on the level the going was better, and the big bay had drawn ahead. The cob was steaming like a kettle, but there was good Welsh blood in its veins and it was still going strong.

A mile or more they went. Then Inglis caught sight of a tall pinnacle of rock rising from the hillside to the right. He knew it for the Devil's Chimney, and this sign-post told him that a little further on the valley forked into two branches, one of which, the left hand, was passable for horses, while the other, to the right, led straight into Merlin's Mire, one of the worst bogs on the moor.

He could have yelled with delight as Otley kept to the right. And then in that moment of triumph his own horse slipped on a smooth stone and came down in a heap, flinging its rider over its head.

Otley heard the crash and looked back, and as Inglis, unhurt, picked himself up, a peal of jeering laughter came back down wind. Hastily Inglis got hold of the bridle and pulled his mount up again. It was only to find that the poor beast was hopelessly lame.

For a moment he felt that it was all up. Then his courage came back, and setting his teeth, he started afoot up the valley. Otley was already out of sight, and soon out of hearing, too, but, trusting to the barrier of the bog, Inglis ran on steadily. The coombe narrowed, its sides became steeper. The little brook in its centre tumbled foaming over a series of rock ledges. The fog was thick again, but Inglis knew that he was nearing the Mire. He strained his ears for sound of the fugitive. Otley could not cross the mire on horseback, but if he found this out in time and left his horse, he could escape up one side or other of the valley.

Suddenly Inglis became conscious that he could again hear galloping hoofs. The horse was coming back, but was Otley on its back? That was the question.

He dropped behind a rock close to the edge of the brook and crouched there, breathing hard. Nearer and nearer came the pounding hoofs. Next moment Otley was riding right down upon him.

Hardly knowing what he did, yet desperately resolved that he would make one last attempt to capture the fugitive, Inglis leapt out full in Otley's path. The horse saw him and shied away with such violence that the convict lost his seat and shot over the animal's head, landing almost in Inglis' arms. Before he could recover himself Inglis was upon him, and slipping the handcuffs out of his pocket, snapped them on Otley's wrists.

Late that night Grattan sat with Inglis in the latter's quarters. Inglis had just finished the tale of his afternoon's adventure, and lay back wearily in his long chair, puffing comfortably at his pipe.

"A very pretty plot," observed Grattan as he leant over and poked the fire thoughtfully. "But there's just one thing about it that I can't fathom. How on earth did this chap Falcon arrange that the hounds should run across the very field where you chaps were at work? He didn't have a tame fox did he?"

Inglis took the pipe from between his teeth and knocked it out on the edge of the grate.

"Fearon was the fox," he said with a smile.

"Fearon?" repeated Grattan in surprise.

"Yes, Fearon. Fearon dragged a bag of aniseed across the ground the night before."

"H'm," grunted Gratton. "Strikes me he'll have a chance to do some more useful work in the near future. What will he get for this little job?"

"Two years hard," answered Inglis.

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HOW TO ENTER THE CONTEST TO-DAY.

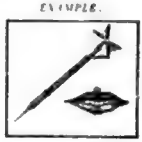
The first eighty-four pictures appeared in the "Royal Magazine" for July, August, September, October, November, December, and January. Copies may be obtained through any newsagent for 4½d. each (December Number 6d.), or the seven numbers will be sent post free for 3s. from the Publisher, "Royal Magazine," 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

ON the following page you will find a set of twelve pictures representing the names of railway stations which have been selected by the Editor, and further sets of pictures will appear monthly in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE. These prizes are offered to the readers who discover the names of the railway stations represented under the conditions below.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Competitors are required to write clearly in ink beneath each picture the name of the station they believe it represents, fill in their names and addresses in the space provided, cut out the page, and keep it until further instructions appear in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE. The last set of Picture Puzzles will appear in the June Number of THE ROYAL, published on May 22nd, 1915, making 144 pictures in all.

EXAMPLE.



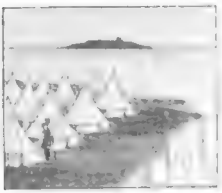
DART-MOUTH.

KEEP YOUR LISTS UNTIL THE DATE FOR SENDING IN IS ANNOUNCED.

READ THESE CONDITIONS CAREFULLY.

1. Write the name of each station clearly in ink. One name only is allowed under each picture.
2. No alterations may be made in the names. If you have made a mistake, cross out the word and write it afresh. When you have filled up your list cut it out and keep it till we tell you what to do with it.
3. Competitors may send in as many complete series of pictures as they please, but each complete series will be judged independently. Sets must be fastened together in the top left-hand corner.
4. The prize of £500 will be paid to the competitor from whom the Editor receives a complete series of pictures with all the names correct of the actual stations as represented. If no competitor sends in a correct list the prize of £500 will go to the sender of the most nearly correct list. In the event of ties the prizes will be divided.
5. The Editor of the Royal will not be responsible for the loss or non-delivery of any attempt, and proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of receipt or delivery.
6. No member of the staff of the Royal Magazine may enter for this competition.
7. Only the names of railway stations found on Pearson's List of Railway Stations will be admitted. This list is obtainable for 5d. through any newsagent or bookstall, or it will be sent post free for three penny stamps by The Publisher, Room 34, THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
8. Competitors must agree to abide by these conditions, and the Editor's decision is in every respect final.

NINTH SET OF PICTURE PUZZLES (Nos. 85—96).



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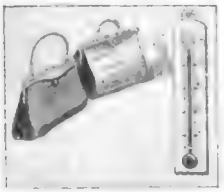

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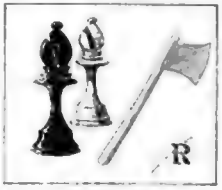

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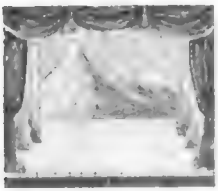

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NAME

ADDRESS

CASQUETTE ET CLOCHETTES

QUITE UNEATABLE.

An orderly officer going his rounds at dinner-time at a Territorial camp asking the usual question: "Any complaints, men?" received a complaint from No. 6 mess, who were having soup.

"Well, what is the matter with it?" inquired the officer.

"Why, sir, we couldn't get it in our mess tins," the mess orderly explained.

"Now, look here," said the officer, "did you come to camp to grumble or serve your country?"

"Well, I came to serve my country, sir, but not to eat it."

* * * *

MOURN FOR THE PIG.

It was the kindly custom in the village for the well-to-do inhabitants to make good any loss which the villagers might sustain through the death of any livestock. The retired manufacturer who had only recently settled in the village was ignorant of this laudable practice, and was considerably puzzled by the visit of a labourer's wife, who explained that she had lost a pig.

"Well, I haven't got it," exclaimed the bewildered newcomer.

"What I mean, sir, is, of course, the pig died," nervously explained the woman.

"Well, what do you want me to do?" cried the thoroughly exasperated man. "Send a wreath?"

* *

THE RULING INSTINCT.

COHEN: "Hands up, or I'll shoot!"

QUICK-WITTED BURGLAR: "Fifty dollars fer de gun!"

COHEN: "Sold!"

A QUICK CHANGE.

CUSTOMER: "I want a hat, but it must be in the latest style."

SALESMAN: "Kindly take a chair, madam, and wait a few minutes; the fashion is just changing."

* * *

TO THE EDITOR.

My muse (at times, alas!) so rare
Inspired some verses once; they were,
Of course, about the war.
Their beauty thrilled me through and through,
And so I sent them up to you,
Alone with nothing more.

I vowed the nation should not miss
A gift so rich and rare as this,
Quite unsurpassed before.
Alas! they soon returned to me,
Which proved my "gift" could only be
A loan and nothing more.

John W. Francis.

* * * * *

IMPOSSIBLE FEAT!

Jenkins had ceased to complain, but one evening his troubles as a strap-hanger in the train got so bad that he felt bound to expostulate.

"Excuse me, sir," he said to the man sitting by him, "but would you mind moving your portmanteau from the gangway? I really can hardly find room to stand."

"Move my portmanteau?" gasped the stranger.

"Those, sir, are my feet!"

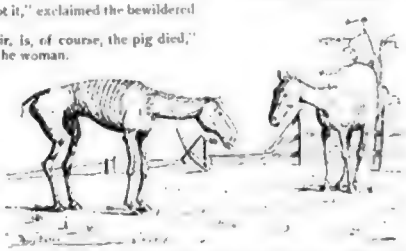
"Is that so?" said Jenkins. "Then perhaps you would pile them one above the other."

* *

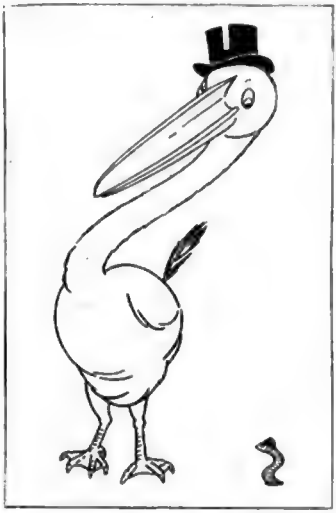
THE ONLY EXPLANATION.

SUBALTERN: "What on earth are you fellows doing? There hasn't been a hit signalled for the last half-hour."

PRIVATE: "I think we must have shot the marker, sir."



***BONY HORSE** to equine companion: "I'm so worried about this horrible war; you know, we might be commandeered at any minute."*



"As you have come by Underground —

TRUE TO HIS TRADE.

MAGISTRATE (to burglar): "What is your trade?"

PRISONER: "Locksmith, yer worship."

MAGISTRATE: "What were you doing when the police entered?"

PRISONER: "Making a bolt for the door."

* * * * *

ONE AT A TIME.

A great general was at one time asked what incident in his life caused him the most amusement.

"Well," he said, "I always laugh when I think of the Irishman and the army mule. I was riding down the line one day when I saw an Irishman mounted on a mule which was kicking rather freely. The mule finally got his foot caught in the stirrup, when, in the excitement, Pat remarked:

"'Well, begorra, if you're goin' to git on I'll be gittin' off!'"

* * * * *

NOTHING COULD SAVE HER.

One of a party left his corner seat in an already crowded railway carriage to go in search of something to eat, leaving a rug to reserve his place. Returning, he found that, in spite of the rug and the protests of his fellow passengers, the seat had been usurped by a well-dressed woman. With flashing eyes she turned upon him when he remonstrated.

"Do you know, sir, that I am one of the directors' wives?"

"Madam," he replied, "were you the director's only wife I should still protest."

GOOD AT MISSING IT.

FIRST SUBURBANITE: "I see they have taken the 8 a.m. train off this line. Do you miss it?"

SECOND SUBURBANITE: "Oh, nothing like as much as I used to when it was on."

* * * * *

A TRAGEDY IN HIGH LIFE.

Richard on an aeroplane
Thought he'd like to fly—
Emulate the pretty birds,
Warbling in the sky.

Flying lessons Richard took,
Worked like any Kaffir;
Soon he talked of running o'er
To see Aunt Jane in Jaffa.

He started on the little trip,
But never crossed the main;
Sorrowing relations know
They'll see him ne'er again.

The aeroplane fell sixty feet,
Alighting on a spire.
And Richard now (we like to think)
Has joined the heavenly choir.

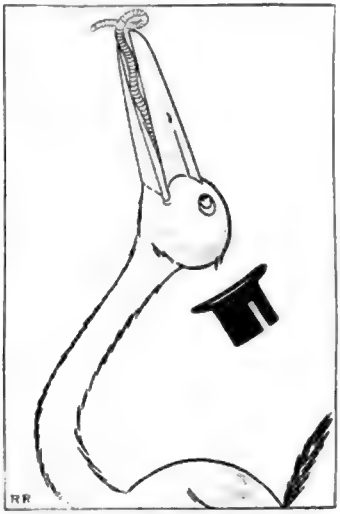
F. M. Dean.

* * * * *

ALL OR NOTHING.

"I've come to ask for your daughter's hand," faltered the young man, scratching his off-shin with his near foot.

"Can't have it!" snapped the stern parent. "I ain't in the instalment business. When you can support the entire girl, then you can have her."



—"You may as well go home by Tube"

REMARKABLY ACTIVE.

FRIEND: "Have you ever been active service, Colonel?"

COLONEL GREY: "I have, sir—very active. I once promised a waiter two shillings if he served me quickly."

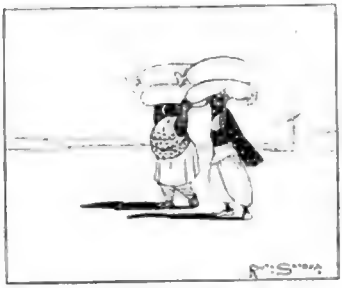
* * *

PRONOUNCED FATAL.

"How do you pronounce 'pneumonia'?" asked the French boy, who had come to England to learn the language.

His English chum told him.

"That's odd," replied the French boy. "It says in this story I'm reading that the doctor pronounced it 'fatal.'"



1. The way was long, the sun was hot,
The Arabs were a lazy lot.

A FITTING SUBSTITUTE.

SMALL BILLY (at seaside): "Can't I have a ride on a donkey?"

MOTHER: "No, darling. Father says not."

SMALL BILLY: "Why can't I have a ride on a donkey, mother?"

MOTHER (to father): "Oh, for goodness' sake, David, give him a ride on your back to keep him quiet."

* * *

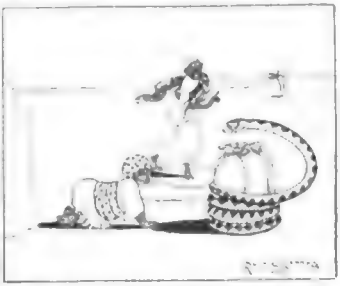
GOOD AT CHARGING.

CLIENT: "You ought to have gone into the Army, not the Law."

SOLICITOR: "Why?"

CLIENT: "By the way you charge there would be little left of the enemy."

2. They paused to rest, until they spied
A snake who did the Gaby Glide.



3. Sweet music wooed him on his road,
To coil himself around their load.

EXCELLENT CASH.

IRRITATED LADY: "No, it doesn't fit, and I shall expect the money back."

MR. MOSES: "But, goot gracious——"

IRRITATED LADY: "Your advertisements say: 'Money returned if not approved.'"

MR MOSES: "So they do, my tear madam, so they do, but your money was approved. It was very goot money!"

* * *

A NEGLECTED TALENT.

WIFE: "In a battle of tongues a woman can hold her own."

HUSBAND: "M'yes, p'raps she can, but she never does."

MAKING A STIR.

It was at an evening party, and a gentleman at the gay gathering asked a friend in a whisper:

"How shall I stir the fire without interrupting the music?"

"Oh, between the bars, of course!" was the reply.

* * *

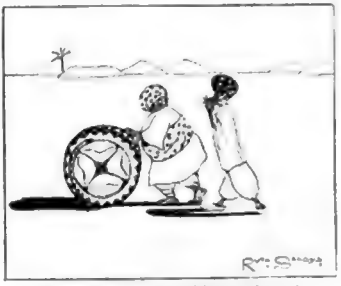
MOST MISLEADING.

SERGEANT: "Halt! You can't go there."

PRIVATE MURPHY: "Why not, sir?"

SERGEANT: "Because it's the general's tent."

PRIVATE MURPHY: "Then, bedad, what are they doing with 'Private' above the door?"



4. Thenceforth the Gaby Glide was banned;
The snake did cart-wheels on the sand.

SHE: "I wish they'd 'ave toe dancing at these 'ere balls. I loves it."
HE dismally): "I felt you did."

HIS PROTEST WAS IGNORED.

MAGISTRATE (severely): "Didn't I tell you the last time you were here that I never wanted to see you again?"

PRISONER: "Yes, sir, and I told the policeman so, but he wouldn't believe me."

* * * * *

A QUESTION OF BREEDING.

An old farmer went to a cattle show to exhibit a favourite cow, with which he had high hopes of winning the first prize. On learning the result, and that his cow had been placed fifth, his anger knew no bounds, and, rushing into the ring, he attacked the judges.

"Why is my cow not first? What are her faults, I'd like to know?"

At this point one of the judges approached him and answered:

"Her faults, my good man, are somewhat akin to your own. She lacks good breeding."

* * * * *

JUST TO HUMOUR HIM!

MRS. BETTERHAWSE: "I am told that you allow your husband to carry a latch-key?"

MRS. GRAYHAIR: "Yes; but it does not fit the door. I just let him carry it to humour him. He likes to show it to his friends and make them think he is independent."

A DOUBTFUL COMPLIMENT.

MISS GUSHER: "It was very good of you, Mr. Highroller, to name your yacht after me. What is she like?"

MR. HIGHROLLER: "Well, she's not much to look at, but she's very fast."

* * * * *

THE NOTICEABLE PAUSE.

A gentleman who had married his cook was giving a dinner party, and between the courses the good lady sat with her rather red hands spread on the tablecloth. Suddenly the burr of conversation ceased, and in the silence that followed a young man on the right of his hostess said pleasantly:

"Awful pause!"

"So they may be," said the old-time cook, with heightened colour; "and yours would be like them if you had done half my work."

* * * * *

PARALLEL CASES.

GUARD: "Sir, this is not a smoking carriage."

PASSENGER: "I am quite aware of that; I'm not smoking."

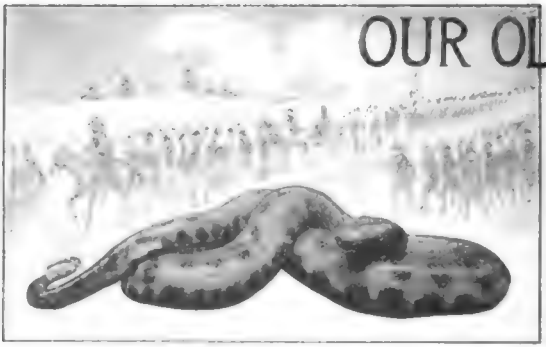
GUARD: "But you have your pipe in your mouth."

PASSENGER: "Yes, and I have got my feet in my boots, but I am not walking."

She used to toy with powder-puff
And dally with her hair,
But now, instead, she's knitting socks
That nobody can wear.

? ASK ANOTHER !
"SORRY, OLD CHAP, DIDN'T HURT YOU, DID IT?"
"AD A H'ACCIDENT, SIR?"
"HELLO, JONES! IN A HURRY?"
"EGG NOT QUITE FRESH, SIR?"
"NOT GOT WET? HAVE YOU GEORGE?"

OUR OLDEST

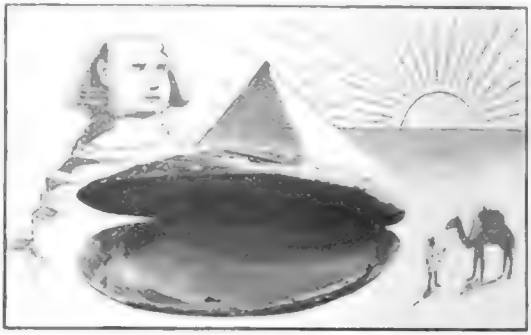


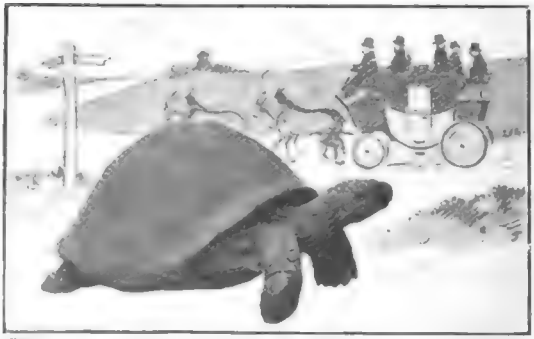
THE PYTHON.

The giant python lives to the age of over a hundred years, so that there may be pythons now living who were alive when Napoleon and his troops made their terrible retreat from Moscow.

THE MUSSEL.

Grant specimens of this shell-fish are said to have existed five thousand years ago. The mussel's outlook on life, however, precludes its giving away any secrets about the ancient Egyptian patriarchs who flourished in its youth.



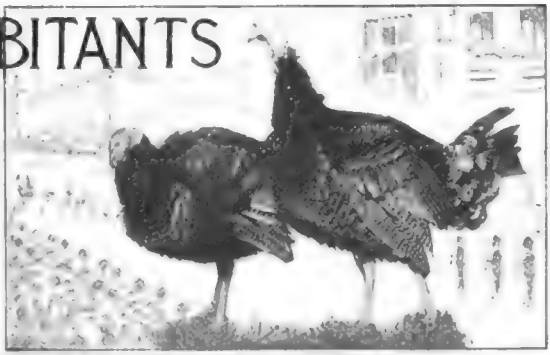


THE TORTOISE.

The tortoise beats its old enemy the hare ten times over in the length of its life, for its maximum age is over a hundred years, so that present-day tortoises existed when the old stage-coach was still in vogue.

Photos Sport & General.

INHABITANTS

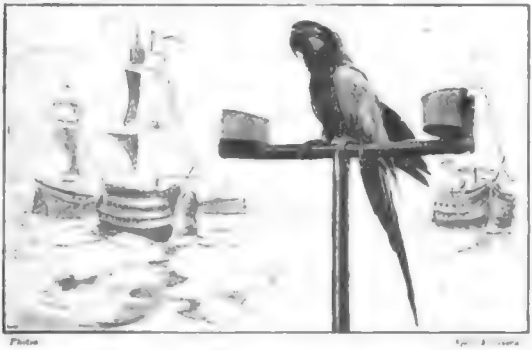


THE TURKEY.

The demands of Christmas put an untimely end to the career of the turkey, otherwise birds which were alive at the time of the Diamond Jubilee sixteen years ago might still be in existence.

THE ELEPHANT.

Centenarian elephants are not uncommon, and many in India are known to have been working for eighty years. Menagerie elephants are shorter-lived, but even they hark back to the days when railway passengers travelled in trucks.



THE PARROT.

There are many instances of parrots being kept in confinement for sixty years, but some live to over a hundred. A well-educated bird might still, were it so inclined, give us vocal information about the Battle of Trafalgar.

A LETTER FROM THE FLEET

By F. E. Baily.

I.

"'Ere's to The Day!" cried Billiam;
"'Eave-o!" 'e says—"*Am Tag!*"
(And they 'op, old pal,
By the Kiel Canal
When *'is* chin begins to wag!)
But Jellicoe, winking 'is starboard eye,
Said: "Cheese it, Sire—go to!"
And the bands played in Germany,
Germany,
Germany—
But we're still out doin' 'em a little bit o' good,
And we ain't 'alf-way through

II.

Take it from me now, Billiam,
From one of us pore, lorst 'ounds,
You blows it off what a navy does,
Not wot it looks or sounds;
And you rings the bell with twelve year men,
Not three year blokes, nor two,
Like the greens growed in Germany,
Germany,
Germany—
And we're still out doin' 'em a little bit o' good,
But we ain't 'alf-way through!

III.

Jellicoe knows you, Billiam;
We've been and we've had a look,
And we'll let you bide by your own seaside
As long as it suits our book;
But when, one day, the banns are called
For Davy Jones and you,
Well—by-bye to Germany,
Germany,
Germany—
And we're still out doin' 'em a little bit o' good,
But we ain't 'alf-way through!

IV.

Open your mouth, now, Billiam,
Lively, and 'old your nose,
And take your powder, without no jam,
We're ready, so down it goes;
Remember, we'll shoot, and sink, and drown,
And ram, and worry, and chew,
Till there *ain't* no more Germany,
Germany,
Germany—
And we're still out doin' 'em a little bit o' good,
But we ain't 'alf-way through!

The Case of Mrs. Claridge.

"The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft a-gley."

By F. A. Symons.

I.

Dr. Philip Merryweather threw himself into an armchair in his library and congratulated himself upon having completed a particularly strenuous day's work. To a rising Harley Street doctor, who has known the sufferings consequent upon waiting for patients, too much work, by comparison, is joy rather than sorrow.

Nevertheless, as the doctor lit a cigar and chose a book, he breathed a hope that his telephone and door bell were silenced for the night. In fact, half-tempted to remove the telephone receiver from its hook, he had actually reached out his hand when the bell resounded through the room.

"Well?" inquired he wearily, his ear to the receiver. "Yes, I am Dr. Merryweather."

"Oh! Will you please come at once?" was the message in a woman's voice.

"Where to?" he asked, sighing involuntarily.

"The name is Claridge, but as you have never attended the lady it will convey nothing to you. I am the nurse. The motor was sent for you half-an-hour ago from Hampstead. The case is urgent. Please come quickly."

"But what is the nature of the case?" he persisted.

The answer—if answer it was meant to be—was interrupted by a knock at the library door, followed by the entrance of the doctor's maid.

"There is a motor-car at the door, sir, come to fetch you," she announced.

Turning again to the telephone he found that he had been rung off.

A chauffeur, dressed in a stereotyped blue livery which conveyed nothing as to who employed him, touched his cap when the doctor, carrying his usual professional bag, entered the car. There was no crest on it, no hint of any kind as to his unknown patient. If, however, the car could be taken as any criterion, its owner was, at least, decidedly wealthy. Merryweather knew nobody of the name of Claridge. The explanation as to why he had been summoned from such a distance would, no doubt, elucidate itself in due course.

The car must have exceeded the speed limit more than once. When the quieter roads were reached it made no pretence of doing otherwise. It was quite half-an-hour before they reached their destination. The chauffeur pulled up at last at a corner house of a terrace, and the doctor seized his bag and sprang from the car.

The front door was opened at once. A gentleman, who had evidently been on the watch, greeted the doctor with a smile of satisfaction.

II.

"I am afraid, Dr. Merryweather," he said, "you are just too late. Still, now that you are here, I would like you to see my wife. My name is Claridge."

Looking about him, the doctor preceded his host into what appeared to be a spacious house. Mr. Claridge talked volubly as he helped the doctor off with his coat. He was a clean-shaven, well-groomed man, some five-and-thirty years of age.

From a room far down the passage there suddenly arose the plaintive wailing of a baby. The next moment a woman, dressed as a nurse, emerged from the room.

"I must explain, Dr. Merryweather," said Mr. Claridge, "how you came to be called in at the last moment."

He coughed apologetically.

"The truth is that my wife dislikes men doctors. So she gave herself into the hands of a nurse instead of a qualified doctor. But as this is her first baby, I insisted upon the

nurse telephoning for you. Your reputation was, of course, well-known to me."

"Ah, I see!" replied the doctor blandly. "But, apparently, your anxiety was found to be unnecessary?"

"Yes. Quite so!" declared Claridge. "While you were on your way the baby was born. I should like you to look in on my wife, now that you have come, and, of course, I will pay you your ordinary fee. Otherwise, there appears to be nothing for you to do."

"I am glad to hear that your fears have come to nothing," answered the doctor, smiling. "I congratulate you. May I see Mrs. Claridge at once, please?"

The nurse, who had been waiting on the threshold, opened the door of the sick room. Waving aside Mr. Claridge, who attempted to follow, Dr. Merryweather entered and glanced about him.

From a cradle by the fire arose the wails of an infant. Ignoring it for the moment, the doctor moved to the bedside. A woman, young and decidedly beautiful, raised thick lashes languidly to meet his inspection, then turned away her head and sighed weakly. Her face, even in the dim light from a shaded lamp, was seen to be flushed. The doctor placed his fingers on her wrist. Her pulse was beating furiously.

"Everything is quite all right, doctor," whispered the nurse. "In fact, the patient begged me not to call you in."

"Humph!" he murmured, turning from the bed. "Her pulse is extremely rapid. You must keep her very quiet."

"Yes, sir, I will see that she is quiet," replied the woman. "Will you please look at the baby, too, sir? He is a fine, healthy boy. He has a very interesting birthmark, which is exactly the same as one on his mother."

Lifting the infant from the cradle as she spoke, she began to loose the wrapper. The doctor waited until the baby lay naked before him.

"There it is, sir!" said the nurse, pointing to a small brownish stain on the skin just below the shoulder-blade. "Curious that Mrs. Claridge should have the same mark below her shoulder also."

"No, not curious!" answered the doctor. "Heredity can account for much more remarkable things than that. May I look at the mark on the mother, do you think?"

"Certainly, sir," whispered the woman readily, replacing the infant in the basket, and crossing the room to the bedside.

Mrs. Claridge, lying inert, made no protest. The nurse baring the patient's shoulder, the doctor peered at the tiny stain, which was indeed a very reduplication of the child's.

For quite an appreciable time he appeared to be immersed in thought. The steady breathing of the mother accentuated the stillness. The nurse's eyes, wandering to the doctor's face, seemed to be asking a question which she feared to put into words.

"Yes, decidedly interesting!" he murmured at last. "H'm! There is nothing for me to do. Good-night, nurse!"

"Good-night, sir! Everything is perfectly all right."

Five minutes later Dr. Merryweather, having accepted his fee, was shaking hands with Mr. Claridge on the pavement. The latter's motor was still waiting at the kerb. Lighting a cigar, the doctor threw himself back into the luxurious seat and sighed contentedly. It was a glorious night, and, to an observant man, the world held many wonders.

"Extraordinary!" he muttered as the car gathered speed. "Except for the chauffeur, there did not appear to be a servant in the place. H'm! And that was not the only extraordinary thing!"

He was still steeped in thought as the motor deposited him in Harley Street. He opened the door with his latch-key, stood on the mat for a moment, still in cogitation, then shrugged his shoulders. The grandfather clock in the hall pointed to midnight, and there was a long day's work before him on the morrow. Dismissing his recent case from his mind with a yawn, he helped himself to a small whisky and soda, and retired to his bedroom.

III.

During the weeks that followed, the many interests of a doctor's life allowed little time in Dr. Merryweather's thoughts for the peculiarities of the Claridge household. It was, in fact, nearly two months later before his visit to Hampstead obtruded itself upon his notice.

Returning one day from an important consultation in the country, he was informed by his consulting-room maid that a lady and two gentlemen had been waiting for half-an-hour to see him.

"Mr. and Mrs. Claridge, sir!" explained the girl, as the doctor crossed the hall.

"Ah, good morning, Dr. Merryweather!" cried a jovial voice as he opened the door. "I hope you have not forgotten me?"

"No, Mr. Claridge," replied the doctor gravely. "I never forget anybody."

"A useful attribute!" intervened the other man, rising to his feet. "We, however, have never met before. Permit me to introduce myself—Mr. Hopkins, of the firm of Hopkins, Greentree, & Hopkins, Lincoln's Inn Fields."

"My solicitor!" explained Mr. Claridge urbanely.

Nodding to the bald-headed, fat, little lawyer, who in return bowed politely, the doctor turned his eyes upon the veiled figure sitting in his armchair. He had only seen the lady once, and under very different circumstances of dress, but, even shadowed as it was by her veil, the beautiful contour of her profile was unmistakable.

"And Mrs. Claridge, I perceive!" he said, crossing the room.

With a low, graceful movement, the lady rose, smiled sweetly, and offered her hand. As he held her fingers for an instant, the doctor, with professional instinct, did not fail to notice their nervous trembling, or the heightened colour which the veil could not conceal.

"Please sit down," said he. "I'm afraid you must be tired of waiting for me to come in. Can I offer you tea or anything?"

"No, thank you," answered she softly. "I am quite all right."

The little solicitor coughed, re-seated himself, crossed his legs, and mechanically re-adjusting his spectacles, caught the doctor's eye.

"We are here, Dr. Merryweather," he said, "on—er—business of a very—er—serious nature. Have you—er—ever heard of the will of the late Mr. John Joseph Vandermeyer?"

"No, I am afraid that wills are not in my line," answered the doctor.

"Quite so! Of course not, my dear sir," remarked Mr. Hopkins pompously. "Well, then, I must acquaint you with the facts concerning which we are here to—er—to solicit your help."

"If you can spare the time at the moment, Dr. Merryweather?" interrupted Mr. Claridge.

"I can give you half-an-hour, with pleasure," stated the doctor, glancing at his watch.

"More than enough, my dear doctor," declared Hopkins, wiping his spectacles nervously. "Well, then, you must understand that Mr. Vandermeyer, who was Mrs. Claridge's father, left half a million of money. Mrs. Claridge received a hundred thousand pounds at his death. The remainder, after the payment of certain legacies, was ordered to be held in trust for a son of hers—if any. If, however, there was no son within five years after the death of the testator the accumulated money was to go to a certain nephew. You understand?"

"It seems simple enough," agreed Merryweather.

"Perfectly simple, my dear doctor," cried the solicitor. "And, as you will note, exceedingly disappointing for whoever lost. So much must, at least, be admitted in favour of the present attitude of Mr. George Player, the nephew concerned."

"He is frightfully upset—naturally," remarked Mr. Claridge.

"So much so, indeed, my dear sir, that he publicly declares that the child born to my clients, Mr. and Mrs. Claridge, was never so born."

Breaking into a discordant chuckle the little man blew his nose violently.

"In fact, sir, he has actually brought forward a woman who——"

"Obviously for a substantial consideration," intervened Mr. Claridge.

"Who, as Mr. Claridge says, obviously for a substantial consideration, is prepared to swear that she can prove that Mrs. Claridge is not the mother of the child." With a quick glance in the direction of the silent figure at the other side of the room he dropped his voice.

"The child, unfortunately, only survived its birth by three days."

"Ah!" ejaculated the doctor, following the solicitor's gaze involuntarily.

"But that, my dear doctor, does not alter the legal attitude one iota," continued Hopkins. "The will laid down that it was to be a living male child. As you are, of course, aware, *to live* means merely to breathe—even if it be only for a moment."

Dr. Merryweather nodded.

"I myself heard the child cry when the doctor was present," said Mr. Claridge. "That alone would be all the evidence required."

"More than enough," urged the solicitor, "for as far back as the sixteenth century a learned judge pointed out that—'peradventure, a child may be born dumb'."

Chuckling complacently, he sank back in his chair.

"In fact, my dear doctor, were it not for such evidence as you can afford we might be drawn into a regular second Roger Tichborne case. Fortunately, however,

we can laugh at any such story as that which they are bringing forward."

With a surreptitious glance in the direction of Mrs. Claridge, who still showed no inclination to offer any remark, the doctor rubbed his chin reflectively. The silent immobility of the lady was extraordinary. That she professed an antipathy towards doctors seemed hardly sufficient to warrant such marked aloofness from the conversation. Whatever her reasons, however, her very pose of studied indifference to his presence piqued him.

"It sounds improbable enough," ventured he.

"Decidedly so!" asserted Claridge. "The proof is absolutely incontrovertible. My wife swears to her motherhood; you and the nurse corroborate her. The case for the plaintiff must obviously be quashed at the outset."

"Well, then, if that is so we can now go," cried Mrs. Claridge, suddenly rising to her feet.

"Certainly! Certainly!" stammered Mr. Hopkins in surprise. "For the present we need not, my dear doctor, detain you longer from your patients."

"No. And I am greatly obliged to you," added Claridge. "Mr. Hopkins will discuss the remuneration for your services at a later date. I can promise you that your time will be well paid for."

Mechanically shaking hands with the two men, the doctor hardly heard their words. The pathos of heavily-fringed eyes, the delicate beauty of the sad face behind the veil, occupied his thoughts. For an instant, in which he held open the door for her to pass, her fingers again rested in his. The men, collecting their hats and sticks, were, for the moment, absorbed in their own affairs.

Suddenly for the flash of a second, her eyes met his.

The look, though momentary, was so pregnant with meaning that he was left standing spellbound. Fear, entreaty, almost panic, spoke to him.

He stepped forward instinctively, an inarticulate cry upon his lips. Then reason returned to him. The unspoken words conveyed in that fleeting glance had been meant for him alone. A secret had been intrusted to him. What the whole secret was he could only suspect.

"Are you still living at Hampstead, Mrs. Claridge?" he asked, controlling his voice with difficulty.

"No; we have moved to a house in Kensington, No. 203, South Alington Street," intervened Claridge, slipping his arm through his wife's.

The door shut, and Dr. Merryweather was alone with his thoughts. Leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece, he did not move for some minutes. At last, consulting his watch, he rang the bell.

"I don't expect any more patients to-night," he said to the maid, "but if anybody calls, I will be back in half-an-hour."

IV.

Leaving the house, he visited a case, and walked slowly back to dinner, still absorbed in the Claridge affair. He was, however, destined to be given little time for further calm consideration concerning the strange events which had forced themselves upon him. During his walk he conjured up, in detail, a picture of a scene in the bedroom which he had visited on that fateful night at Hampstead. And the more he thought over it, the more he doubted. With intent to analyse the situation more thoroughly over an after-dinner cigar, he entered his house.

"Mr. George Player to see you, sir!" announced the maid.

"Humph! The plot thickens!" he grunted. "What now, I wonder?"

The time given him for conjecture was short, for the door of his consulting-room opened immediately.

"Good evening, doctor!" said a tall, lanky, cadaverous individual standing in the doorway. "I have called to see you in connection with the case of Mrs. Claridge."

"Oh!"

The visitor, with keen, searching eyes, met the doctor's scrutiny unflinchingly. A middle-aged man, dressed in quiet grey, he looked like a student. That he was a gentleman was obvious.

"I heard," he stated with directness, "that Mr. Claridge and his solicitor have been to see you. You attended professionally at a house in Hampstead when a certain birth took place, I believe?"

"I did," answered Dr. Merryweather tentatively.

Mr. Player, staring straight into the doctor's face, presented a suspicion of a smile.

"And would you be surprised to hear," he asked, "that on that occasion—or, in fact, any other occasion—Mrs. Claridge did not give birth to a child?"

"Not in the least," answered the doctor promptly.

"What do you mean by that?" cried Mr. Player in surprise. "Do you mean that you knew it all the time?"

"No, I did not *know* it. Recent facts, however, have taken away any surprise at your statement."

"Humph! Yet I understand that you are one of the principal witnesses, to the effect that you saw the child born," asserted Mr. Player, with growing excitement.

"Well, it would seem that you have been misinformed," retorted the doctor blandly.

"Apparently!" snapped Mr. Player. "I am glad to hear it. You are a wise man."

"You are pleased to be complimentary," remarked the doctor with a smile.

For some moments Mr. Player stared at the carpet, then slowly raised his head and glared beneath shaggy eyebrows.

"You *did* see a baby at the time, Doctor."

"I did."

"Ah! And may I ask if you would be able to identify the baby if you saw it again?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure, sir?"

"Quite sure!"

Mr. Player, his eyes flashing excitement, sprang from his chair.

"Can I induce you, doctor, to come with me now in a taxi, and identify the baby?" he stammered.

"What! It did not die, then?"

Mr. Player, chuckling hoarsely, seized his hat and stick.

"Come and see!" he cried.

The doctor, groaning inwardly at this further delay to his dinner, followed Mr. Player without a word. His interest in this case was growing momentarily keener. If only for curiosity alone, he was anxious to see the *dénouement*. Then, his thoughts again reverting to the beautiful face of sorrow presented by Mrs. Claridge as she had bidden him good-bye, he sighed profoundly.

The journey by taxi-cab was short. It was outside a mews in Kensington that Mr. Player stopped the cab.

"I wish to introduce you to the baby of the wife of a groom who lives here," explained the latter, jumping from the cab. Opening the door of a tiny house he invited the doctor to enter.

A round-faced, buxom young woman answered Player's call.

"This is Mrs. Willcox, Dr. Merryweather. If you ask her she will tell you that she gave birth to a male child on September 27th."

"Yes, sir, at 11.35 at night," corroborated the woman.

"She will also tell you that, having already three children, she agreed some weeks before its birth to sell the baby to Mrs. Claridge."

"That was it exactly, sir," cried the woman, wiping her hands on her apron. "The nurse persuaded me to go and stay in her house at Hampstead. As soon as the baby was born she took it from me. I got a hundred pounds. But, sir, I fretted and fretted, until in three days I handed back the money and claimed my little baby, sir."

"Yes, yes, my good woman. Quite so!" interrupted Mr. Player. "We would like to see the baby, please."

Mrs. Willcox, running at once into an inner room, could be heard the next moment crooning over a baby.

"You understand, Dr. Merryweather?" whispered Mr. Player. "Mrs. Claridge and Mrs. Willcox occupied adjoining rooms in the nurse's house. The infant, of course, was merely carried at once from the one room to the other."

"Here he is, sir—the beauty!" cried the woman, holding out the infant proudly for inspection. "How could anybody think as how I could part with him for always even for a hundred pounds? I stood it for three days, sir, and cried my eyes out all the time. They wouldn't give him up at first. It wasn't until I threatened to tell the police that I got my boy back, sir."

"Exactly!" exclaimed Mr. Player. "That was the day that Mrs. Claridge's reputed baby died. Eh, what? Is this the baby you saw at Hampstead, doctor?"

"May I see your baby's back, Mrs. Willcox?" asked the doctor quietly.

The woman, still continuing to chatter volubly, made no objection to undressing the infant. Pinching his fat limbs affectionately, she turned him on his face. Mr. Player, his eyes depicting his keen attention, waited breathlessly for the verdict.

The doctor, placing his finger on a tiny birthmark below the infant's shoulder-blade, turned a grave face to his interrogator.

"Yes," stated he, "this is the child I saw at Hampstead."

"Good!" ejaculated Mr. Player. "Then I take it, doctor, that you will not disbelieve me when I say that that fellow, Claridge, is one of the most unmitigated scoundrels unhung. His wife is terrorised by him. This subtle plot was undoubtedly all his doing. She—poor girl!—is afraid to speak up. The nurse has obviously been well

bribed. The solicitors, I imagine, are mere dupes."

Dr. Merryweather turned towards the door. His thoughts were again with the woman whose appealing glance refused to leave him in peace. What could he do to help her? That she was a willing agent in this affair he did not believe. Should he beard the smooth-tongued husband without delay or play a waiting game?

"Good night, Mr. Player!" he murmured. "You know where to find me if you want me. I shall walk, I think, to South Alington Street."

Without waiting for Player, he started off at once. His statement that he intended to visit the house of the people who had attempted to use him as a blind tool had been made on impulse. What exactly he proposed to say or do if he carried out his boast he had as yet no idea.

The distance from the mews was comparatively short. No. 203 South Alington Street, was a pretentious dwelling. The doctor, still under the influence of blind impulse, rang the bell.

A footman opened the door.

"Is Mrs. Claridge at home?" inquired Merryweather.

"Yes, sir," replied the man, in obvious surprise at the lateness of the visit.

"I am Dr. Merryweather. Tell her that I wish to see her on a matter of great importance."

The footman, opening the door on the left of the hall, ushered the visitor into a library. The apartment, with its luxurious furniture, books, and pictures was, undoubtedly, the habitation of cultured people.

Within a minute Mrs. Claridge, closely followed by her husband, entered. It was quite plain that Dr. Merryweather was not to be left alone with her. It was in the hope of speaking to her alone that he had come Fate and Mr. Claridge, however, had decreed otherwise.

"Ah, very pleased to see you, doctor!" declared the latter. "To what good fortune do we owe this visit?"

When there was disagreeable work to be done Merryweather did not believe in beating about the bush. Until he had completely dissociated himself from this case he felt that he could not rest.

"I am afraid," he explained bluntly, "that I have no pleasant news for you. I cannot be a witness for you in your case against Mr. Player. I have just identified the infant born in the flat at Hampstead. Therefore the child is not dead."

Claridge's face paled to the colour of ashes. Mrs. Claridge said no word.

"But I can show you a death certificate," stammered the former. "You saw the child born. You cannot deny so much."

"Mr. Claridge," said Merryweather solemnly, "I saw no infant born, and, in my opinion, no infant died. If Mrs. Claridge will, however, kindly permit me to examine her shoulder the result might be interesting."

For some seconds the silence of the room was actually painful. Claridge's lips moved, but no words came. Mrs. Claridge moved not a muscle.

"Humph!" grunted the doctor at last. "I was afraid that it would be washed away by now. It was cleverly painted—so cleverly that at the time it nearly deceived me. Who thought of it, I wonder?"

"The nurse!" gasped Mrs. Claridge, burying her face in her hands.

"Ah!" breathed the doctor, rising to his feet. "I will not attempt to put into words what I think of your conspiracy to use me as a means to defeat justice, Mr. Claridge. As for your unfortunate wife she has my sincere pity."

"But, look here, my dear doctor, this is rank, arrant nonsense," blustered Claridge Springing to his feet he walked rapidly up and down the room, suddenly halting in front of his wife. "Mildred, leave us! I wish to talk privately with the doctor."

With not so much as a glance at either of the men Mrs. Claridge swept through the door, held open for her by her husband.

Shutting the door softly Claridge opened the drawer of a writing table, extracted something from it, and again faced the doctor.

"Now then, sir," cried he, his eyes flashing angrily, "you and I, Dr. Merryweather, must come to an understanding. That you have again seen our baby, which died three days after birth, is, of course, all bunkum. To those who wish to think so all babes are alike. A simple loss of memory will give you the sum of ten thousand pounds."

Looking about him, as if the walls had ears, his voice ended in a whisper:

"If you say you saw the child born you receive that sum from me."

Without a word Dr. Merryweather strode towards the door.

The next instant he found himself facing the muzzle of a revolver, behind which the eyes of Claridge fixed him.

"Sit down!" hissed Claridge.

("THE CASE OF MRS. CLARIDGE" continued overleaf.)

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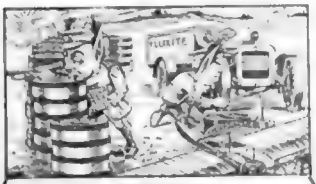

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Shrugging his shoulders the doctor calmly seated himself, as directed, in the nearest chair.

"Well?" inquired he sarcastically, "what do you propose to do—intimidate me, or what? Aren't you losing your head in a somewhat ridiculous fashion? Your hand being now on the table its weakness becomes painfully apparent."

"Listen!" cried Claridge. "Ten thousand pounds if you help. If you refuse, you certainly do not leave this house."

The doctor laughed lightly.

"If your principal witness cannot be found, where will your case be?" he inquired blandly.

"My dear fool," explained Claridge, his eyes narrowing, "if my principal witness cannot be found, who would be suspected? To whose interest would it be? The other side's—naturally." Dropping the revolver, he deftly opened the door and slipped outside. "Think it over!"

For an hour Dr. Merryweather sat considering his position. The windows of the room opened on to a deep area. In any case, he saw no necessity at present for a melodramatic exit. That Claridge must be almost mad to imagine that such a detention could really assist his case was as clear as crystal.

Suddenly his ears were held by the noise of a motor-car stopping in front of the house. Then the door-bell rang. With awakened interest, the doctor heard the footman open the door. A moment passed; then the sound of voices in altercation echoed through the hall.

Five minutes later the library door was flung open. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Claridge stood staring at the prisoner's immobile face.

"Well, Mr. Hopkins, this is a nice business," said Merryweather angrily.

"I knew nothing of this, sir, believe me," cried the little man, with trembling lips. "I received a telephone message from Mrs. Claridge to come at once. She said that you were being detained against your will."

"Ah! I knew it was against her will also," murmured the doctor. "For her sake, Mr. Hopkins, I have forgotten everything known to me in connection with this affair. This continued forgetfulness, however, must depend upon the case being entirely dropped. If you do not do so, please understand that I shall give irrefutable evidence against you."

Turning on his heel, the doctor walked to the front door, nobody preventing him. With his hand upon the knob, he turned an instant as his ears caught the swish of a woman's dress. Mrs. Claridge had apparently been near enough to hear his words. He raised his voice. "Please convey my sympathy to your wife, Mr. Claridge. She needs a friend badly."

* * * * *

That the great Vandemeyer inheritance fell to Mr. George Player, in default of a male heir through Mrs. Claridge, is a matter of common notoriety. How such a finale came about, however, has never before been recorded, nor has the fact ever been made known that the inheritor valued Dr. Merryweather's assistance to the extent of a cheque for £1,000.

L'ENVOI.

Here you've come to the last, last page,
Or the last, last page but one;
The curtain falls on the well-set stage,
The race is all but run.
Do you think, as the fun begins to flag,
As the last draught leaves the cup:
"Who are the people that run the Mag.?
Which of them made it up?

"Perhaps they are bald, with beards of grey,
Wrinkled, and old, and bent,
Who hobble on sticks as they drift away
To rest after hours well-spent;
Perhaps they are young, with glad, glad ties,
And vests of vermilion glow!"
But you won't be right in a thousand tries—
You may guess, *but you'll never know!*

F.

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MR EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

In spite of the bitter struggle now going on between the Allies and Germany, I have not the least hesitation in wishing every ROYAL reader a very happy New Year.

Perhaps you may ask why? I will tell you.

I assume that we are all doing our duty. Some of us are serving the King in one or another of his armed forces, and others, prevented for some reason or another from taking a commission or enlisting, are quietly carrying on with what lies to their hands, and perhaps in addition acting as special constables or joining a Volunteer Defence Corps.

Now, to do one's duty is, or should be, to be happy; therefore, the present crisis notwithstanding, I wish you a very happy New Year, and the best of luck.

OUR £1000 COMPETITION.

I should like to remind everyone who has not entered already that our £1000 Competition closes in the June number, and that, consequently, there is not much time to lose if an attempt is to be made to secure one of the big cash prizes.

If you will bear with me a moment, may I put before you a species of parable?

Supposing someone asked you to spend a few evenings in a delightfully amusing manner, in consideration of which you were to receive £500, what would you say? I think you would agree instantly. Yet this is all we ask you to do—spend an odd hour now and again solving the puzzle pictures printed in the ROYAL, and there is the lure of £500 waiting should your solutions prove correct.

What is your answer to be? Surely the wise person will reply: "How foolish of me not to enter before! I will repair the omission at once!"

THE F.A.F. AGAIN.

The result of Miss Gladys Cooper's appeal on behalf of the Fresh Air Fund last year was a splendid example of the generosity of ROYAL readers, and I publish below the final list of contributions. I hope the donors will accept the cordial thanks both of Miss Gladys Cooper and myself.

Amounts previously acknowledged: £115 8s. 2d.

Friend in Africa, 2s. 6d.; E. J. K. and R., 3s. 6d.; Anon., 1s. 6d.; F. M. N., 1s. 6d.; A Friend, 10s.; D. Dewry, 2s. 6d.; Hope, 5s.; C. Edwards, £1; Gwen, Marguerite, and Rose, £1; L. R. G., 2s.; W.H. School Farthing Club, 8s.; Miss D Lewis, £1; H. C. White, £1.

Grand (ROYAL) total: £121 3s. 8d.

"MY ADVENTURES AS A SPY"

is the title of an engrossing book by Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Baden-Powell, who, in the course of an adventurous career, has had some near shaves of death and imprisonment. His adventures when charged with the mission of finding particulars of a new form of field gun manufactured by a foreign country, and a thrilling account of the discovery of disguised gun emplacements made by the Kaiser's agents, are only two of the many incidents with which the book is crowded.

"B. P." is an adept with the pen as well as the sword, and at the price of 1s. the book is excellent value. It will be on sale early in February and may be obtained post free for 1s. 3d. from Messrs. C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.

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